TWO SIDES of A STORY

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OLEY GROW'S DAUGHTER.—MRS. WINTER-ROWD'S MUSICALE.—"UNFINISHED."—MARCH AND APRIL.—RAISING CAIN.

BY

GEORGE PARSONS LATHROP

BRENTANO'S
UNION SQUARE NEW YORK
1900

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CONTENTS.

	PAGE
TWO SIDES OF A STORY,	1
OLEY GROW'S DAUGHTER,	44
CAPTAIN BILLY,	71
MRS. WINTERROWD'S MUSICALE,	101
"UNFINISHED,"	142
MARCH AND APRIL,	166
"RAISING CAIN,"	208
IN A MARKET-WAGON,	225

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TWO SIDES OF A STORY.

I.

FROM Constantinople, N. Y., a small city within a short distance of Oneida Lake, Martin Updike, a young but able lawyer, who had been settled in the place for less than a year, was suddenly called to Kansas City on an errand of considerable interest.

He had been intrusted with a claim for Baffler, Kidge & Co., wholesale dry-goods dealers in New York. A younger member of this firm had been a chum of Updike's, and used his influence to put the case in his friend's charge. The claim was against one Owen Haymaker, who, for some months, had kept a store in Kansas City, and had made a sensation by the enormous business that he conducted.

The old dealers, who had grown gray in the belief that they represented the advance-guard of "Western enterprise," rubbed their eyes and shook their heads when confronted with the peculiar methods of Haymaker, who was un-

derstood to have emerged from the effete and somnolent East. He offered the most extraordinary bargains at times, selling silks, lawns, laces, ribbons, and other articles for about one-twentieth of their cost; and the result was a wild scramble of customers, each eager to be first. He chartered excursion trains from outlying places, and brought buyers free of charge to his door, where carpets were spread on the sidewalk for them to walk over, and men in livery ushered them in. Occasionally he went so far as to employ the best local brass band to give a gratuitous concert in the back part of his large "emporium;" and, inspired by the music, his customers flew around from counter to counter as actively as if they were exercising at a skating-rink.

But, when his prosperity was at the highest point, he disappeared unceremoniously, leaving a number of large accounts unsettled; and it was found that just before leaving he had also overdrawn upon two of the Kansas City banks to the extent of more than twenty thousand dollars; his illicit gains amounting in all to about one hundred thousand dollars.

A few days before his departure, his wife had taken the cars, ostensibly to visit friends in the East; but the detectives were convinced that she had changed her route and gone to Canada, carrying part of the booty with her perhaps, and that Owen Haymaker had joined her there. No clew sufficiently definite, however, could be obtained to make his pursuit and capture possible.

Before going out from Constantinople, Martin Updike called upon Miss Angie Breese (daughter of the Hon. Calvert Breese, a well-to-do merchant and distinguished county political magnate), and told her about the affair.

"If I can succeed in getting the claim settled for Baffler, Kidge & Co," he said, "it will make my fortune."

"You might possibly make that by staying at home," said Angie, whom it was currently supposed Martin hoped to marry.

And it was quite a triumph for her when he returned, after a couple of weeks, without having accomplished anything.

"It's a complete wreck," he said, as they sat talking together again in the lofty, old fash-

ioned parlor of her father's house, which looked out on the fine portico formed by majestic, fluted, wooden columns. "The man left nothing that we could get hold of, and everybody has given up hope of ever tracing him."

"Well, we've done much better than that here," said Angie. "There have been lots of things going on. Have you heard yet about the dancing-party at Mrs. Gen. Cullender's?"

"No."

"Oh, you ought to have been there!" Angie resumed. "It was almost a ball, and it would have done you good to see all the attention I received. My dance-card was full, and you know a card like that is a cup of joy, filled to the brim, pressed down, and running over. That is, Eben and I nearly ran over some other people in one of our waltzes."

"What, Eben Taft?" Martin asked, heroically striving not to look jealous.

"Yes," she said. "Eben was *so* attentive! Why—would you believe it—we got along splendidly, he and I."

Updike felt as if he were beginning to fade away into a cloud of gloom.

"Perhaps it's just as well that I wasn't there," he remarked, with what is commonly called a significant air, though he probably could have given no reasonable explanation of the significance.

"That is according to how you look at it," Angie replied, giving a friendly little pout. "But we had a new sensation at the Cullenders', too. Have you heard of that?"

Updike began to be irritated by these references to things that he didn't know about.

"How could I hear?" he asked. "You are almost the first person I've talked with since I came back."

"Well, I'll tell you," said Angie, cheerfully ignoring his annoyance. "There is a new arrival, a widow she seems to be—Mrs. Garrish. She has hired that house of Gen. Cullender's right around the corner from him, and Mrs. Cullender invited her to the party. It's the funniest thing that she should have made such a sensation, when there wasn't any particular reason for it. But she did. I guess it was principally because the men all liked her, and the women mostly didn't. And now there's

a grand question whether we shall visit her or not."

"That question," Updike responded, with a shade of sarcasm which he flattered himself was rather delicate, "must be decided according to how you look at it. If the men like her, she must be pleasant. How did she impress *you?*"

"Oh, very charming. She is quiet and sweet, and doesn't seem to be trying to attract attention; but it comes to her just the same."

"Has she a fine presence?" Updike asked mechanically.

"Yes, a great deal of presence," Angie laughed gayly; "and a good deal of absence, too—absence of mind. She seems to lose herself in reveries, and really has a pathetic way, as if she had been through lots of trouble. But she was dressed—oh, exquisitely!—with the loveliest diamonds! Mamma hasn't decided yet about calling on her, because no one knows anything about her. Now you see what you've missed by being away. You can't even join us in talking over Mrs. Garrish."

"That's a pity," Updike returned. "But, if

I'd seen her, I might have been inclined to talk others over to *her*."

"How? Oh, I see! You mean talk other people over to her side."

"Exactly," said Martin. "If there's any prejudice against a person, you know I'm always disposed to take up the defense."

"I know," Angie answered, "what papa says about you: that you're always 'on the other side'; so much so that you even want to argue against yourself. That's why you're such a good lawyer, he says."

"Because I argue against myself?" Martin asked, attempting to turn the compliment aside.

"No," said Angie, blushing; "but because you look so carefully at both sides, and attack your own position until you learn how to defend it best."

"I dare say; yes, I dare say," Updike murmured somewhat inattentively.

He was reflecting how often he had defeated himself in argument on his chance of winning Angie's heart; and he wondered whether these frequent defeats really strengthened his posi-

tion. But he was unable to see how that could be possible. Recovering himself, he assumed a jocose superiority of age and wisdom.

"Your father's view is a very kind and judicious one," he said, "and I hope, Miss Angie, that you will profit by it yourself, and follow my example."

"I don't see how I can," said she, as she rose to bid him good-afternoon; "because I'm not going to be a lawyer myself."

Martin was strongly tempted to ask, "But couldn't you consent to be a lawyer's wife?" Before he could decide to do so, the ponderous outer door of the Græco-Roman portico swung open, and the Hon. Calvert Breese stepped into the hall.

"Ah, Martin," said he, presenting his rugged visage, which was tinged with a light earthy brown, like that of old parchment, at the open door. "Just going? Come in to tea this evening. I want to talk to you."

Updike knew that this meant a conference on politics, and he accepted the invitation.

When he had left the house, instead of going directly to his office, he went around

through Oneida Street, so that he might pass the dwelling-place of the newly arrived Mrs. Garrish. It was a cozy little abode, with a picturesque corner-turret, embowered in fruit-trees. The curtains were up, but no one was visible on the premises.

"What childish curiosity in me, to come around here!" he growled to himself.

Nevertheless, when he returned to the Breeses' for tea, he was in hope that he should hear something more about the new-comer of whom Angie had spoken. But the evening was spent in the study of the Hon. Calvert, who had work in view for the young lawyer in the approaching State campaign, and also intended to secure for Updike, as a reward for past services, the party nomination for Assemblyman of the district.

Updike's "childish curiosity," however, was destined to be gratified the next day. About noon a lady entered his office while he was sitting there alone.

"I was advised to come here," she said timidly, "by General Cullender."

Updike gave a little start, which be-

trayed his thought. "Cullender? Then you are—"

"His new tenant, Mrs. Garrish."

"Oh yes," said Martin; "I know—that is, I shall be glad if I can be of service to you."

She was richly dressed, he observed, although in dark, unobtrusive colors; but the thick vail which concealed the upper part of her face exasperated him.

"I asked the general," she proceeded in a soft voice that floated through Martin Updike's brain like the memory of summer nights, "about making some investments. But he did not like to advise. He said it was always better to employ a lawyer to care for one's estate, and recommended you."

Her melodious tones gave an unbusiness-like charm to the prosaic words, and Updike answered with alacrity, tempered by sentiment:

"If you will tell me in what form your property is at present, Mrs. Garrish, that may be the best way to begin."

"Certainly," she assented. "But, Mr. Updike, let me ask, do you not know me?"

He was taken aback. "Know you! Why, this meeting with you gives me that pleasure."

"But I am sure we have met before," said the lady, drawing up her veil with such delicate grace that it seemed only done so that she might see him better, and not to show her own face.

Bewilderment and excitement were added to Updike's interest now, as he returned her gaze. They were beautiful eyes that met his, mingled of dark gray and brown tints, that had the soft, shadowed depth often seen in a Lake Superior agate. And it was a beautiful face from which they looked out so calmly. Indeed the eyes reflected the whole woman, it seemed, cool, soothing, and restful. At once the truth rushed upon him, while with a quiet smile Mrs. Garrish added: "Don't you remember Long Branch?"

"Eva!" exclaimed Updike, fairly rising to his feet. "Eva Tuthill!"

"Hush," said the lady, without agitation, but in a warning tone that checked him. "Don't utter that name again!"

"Why not?" he asked. "What reason can there be for concealing it?"

Mrs. Garrish sighed. "I will tell you all the reasons by and by. But it is a long story."

She leaned back, as if the weight of sad recollections suddenly oppressed her.

The lawyer insensibly passed into a subdued and sympathetic mood.

"You don't know how delightful it is to see you again," he said dreamily. "And so you have come to live among us here? Will your aunt come too?"

"She is dead," answered Mrs. Garrish softly, as if she were laying a wreath of flowers on a grave. "I am utterly alone in the world."

"But you are Mrs. Garrish now. Your husband—is he also—"

"Ah!" She paused after that word. "It is only a few years since you and I met at Long Branch; but a great deal has happened since." Again there was a pause. "My—husband—is still living."

Updike rose and paced the floor. At length he asked, hesitating: "Are you separated, then?"

He began to think the situation embarrass-

ing, a little unpleasant, possibly dangerous. Angie and her mother, and the ladies at Mrs. Cullender's had perhaps been right in viewing Mrs. Garrish slightly askance. But her manner disarmed this thought.

"It is a painful thing to speak of," she said. "When Gen. Cullender gave me your name, and I found you had established yourself here, I knew I should have to explain to you. But then I also knew that I should find in you an old friend; and that made it easier. My husband has deserted me."

She hid her face in her hand one instant, and Updike shuddered at his own momentary injustice.

"Is not that enough for me to say now?" his visitor asked, looking up at him with pale entreaty. "He has done even worse than that. But—no, I can not tell you now!"

This time she turned her face away, making a half movement to rise; and Martin began to be alarmed lest she should drop her veil again. But she did not. He paused in his walk near her. "Believe me," he said, with real emotion, "I am terribly grieved to hear this."

Visions came back to him of the one vacation at Long Branch which had fallen to his lot. That was when he had been a village law-student, before he came to Constantinople. He remembered Eva Tuthill as a brilliant girl among the many beauties at the sea-side, where she was staying with her aunt; he remembered how a brief sentimental friendship had grown up between himself and Eva; the long, delicious summer nights and the hollow moaning of the breakers below the bluff. His heart grew tender, and he warmed with a desire to vindicate her now from any aspersions that might be cast upon her.

"But you must not tell any one," she adjured him, after they had talked for some time. "I have come here to escape from the past, and to conceal myself. Afterward, when the right time comes, everything can be made clear to others. I have trusted you, Mr. Updike. You will keep the trust?"

"Absolutely," he assured her.

Mrs. Garrish paused at the door as she was going.

"We have had no time for business," she

reminded him; "and I hardly feel like talking of it now. But why not come to see me at my house some evening? Would it be too inconvenient?"

The smile with which she ended made a captivating question-mark.

"No inconvenience at all," said the lawyer. "When?"

Again it was only as an interrogation that Mrs. Garrish said, "To-morrow?"

She left him, with a brief pressure of the hand. Here was Martin Updike, therefore, in possession of the secret about which all the Constantinople gossips were speculating!

The business conversation at Mrs. Garrish's house was far from being tedious. Her property, it transpired, was chiefly in the form of cash, the result of an unexpected legacy from a distant relative in California. She wanted to invest some of it in unregistered government and railroad bonds, after Updike had explained to her the nature of those securities. There were about sixty thousand dollars, and of this she asked him to take ten thousand dollars and deposit it to his own credit.

"Because," she said, "I wish to keep out of reach of my husband. Whenever I want money I will call upon you, and I can draw a check."

"It would be unusual," said Martin, notwithstanding that he was deeply flattered by the confidence she put in him.

" So is my situation unusual," she answered. "Dear Mr. Updike, I must beg you to oblige me!"

He could not resist the appeal of those eyes, with their soft, agate depths.

"I am so glad you consent!" said his fair friend; and, to his amazement, she stepped into the library, opened a safe which had been let into the wall, and took out ten one-thousand-dollar bills, which she insisted upon his taking, in spite of all protest that he could offer.

"I will arrange all this by a written agreement, which you shall sign to-morrow," Updike informed her, putting the bills into an inside pocket.

He remained with her a long while, chatting about old times, until it occurred to him all at once that he had agreed to go to the final

meeting of the Charade Club (it was now June) and escort Angie Breese home. The meeting was at Mrs. Puff's, a few streets distant; and he hurried thither, carrying the ten thousand dollars with him. Everybody noticed his exhilarated manner when he came in; but Angie had been wondering why he did not come earlier, and she was less responsive than the rest were to his gayety.

Once out of doors with her again, starting for home, he said: "I've seen Mrs. Garrish, and find that I knew her several years ago."

"Do tell me all about her, then!" cried Angie.

"Ah!" said Martin, with a dry complacency, "that's asking too much. I am bound not to tell at present. But you may take my word for it that she's all right."

A coolness that was not born of the night wind immediately diffused itself around the pair. At the next street-crossing, Angie, who had allowed Martin his usual privilege of taking her arm in his, released it on pretext of holding her dress; and after this they walked separate.

"Then you have known her very well?" Angie asked.

"Not especially," he returned. "That is, I knew her only a short time formerly, and have just begun to know her again now."

"You were there to-night?" was the next question from Angie.

Updike resented the tone in which it was uttered. "Yes," he said, and was half resolved to make no explanaton. But he added, "She required my advice on business matters."

It was a relief to both these young people when they stopped in front of the Hon. Calvert Breese's house. Ordinarily, Updike would have gone with Angie up the steps; but this time he stopped at the gate. She shook hands with him; but her touch was so indifferent that he almost wished she had not done so.

II.

For three months following that night, a social war raged in Constantinople.

People were not slow to discover that Updike had called on the mysterious new tenant of the turreted cottage; that he had known

her before; and that he continued to visit her frequently. He was at once besieged and waylaid with ingenious questions, the substance of which was: "Is she a widow, or divorced? *Who* is she? Where did she come from?"

Updike himself did not know where she had originally come from, and he was debarred from answering the other questions.

Now, society likes a mystery that it knows all about; one that is supposed to be a secret, yet still can be discussed in corners as if it were a rare discovery, which ought not to be generally mentioned. But a mystery to which there is no handle at all merely provokes society, and comes to be regarded as an insult to its intelligence. A strong party, therefore, was speedily arrayed against Mrs. Garrish, on the ground that she was not a conveniently intelligible mystery. Updike, however, did his best on her behalf by making general statements in her favor. With Mrs. Gen. Cullender it was a matter of pride to uphold the lady whom she invited to her house; and she accordingly placed herself at the head of a

defensive faction, with Martin Updike as her chief lieutenant. Hence all the tears, and woe, and deadly combat without blows, that ensued.

A variety of unpleasant rumors were circulated about Mrs. Garrish, and indignantly denied by the Cullender-Updike party. Old friends were estranged, and families divided on this issue; and as the Hon. Calvert Breese and his wife ranged themselves with the hostile forces, Updike's relations with Angie were broken off. But this did not come to pass without a plea on the young lawyer's part for tolerance.

"You ought," said he to Angie, in a final, dignified interview, "to cultivate the faculty of understanding both sides of a question. I can remember"—here his voice took on a refined bitterness—"when your father, a few weeks ago, used to praise that faculty in me. But now, because it doesn't suit him to have me exercise it"—

"You are looking at only one side," Angie interrupted; "and that is Mrs. Garrish's."

"As it happens," Martin retorted, "I am the

sole person who is in a position to comprehend both views of the situation; and you ought to accept my judgment without debate."

"No," said Angie. "I can see only one side at a time, and I prefer that it should be the right side. You are puzzling everybody by your silence, and so is Mrs. Garrish; and mamma has told me that I must not see you any more, because you are making mischief and—that's what she *says*—a scandal!"

So they parted.

"A scandal!" Yes; that was true; Updike was aware that gossip had been set astir by his frequent meetings with Mrs. Garrish. But how could he help it? He had to see her often, because he was attending to her affairs. His pride rose, and his sense of fair play for Eva Garrish lent its aid in making him stubborn and unrelenting.

When September came, the Hon. Calvert Breese had changed his sentiments about Martin as completely as some of the leaves had changed their color in the beautiful wooded landscape surrounding Constantinople.

"This business of Updike and the Garrish

woman," the Hon. Calvert declared, "has settled that young man's chances for the Assembly nomination—if *I* have anything to say about it." And Mrs. Breese fully concurred in this resolution.

Hearing of it, Gen. Cullender, although he had hitherto invariably supported the Hon. Calvert in politics, at once organized a movement to run Martin Updike as an independent candidate. But even this signal honor did not quite console our friend for the unhappy trouble between Angie Breese and himself; more especially since he had noticed that Eben Taft, formerly his hopeless rival in the race for Angie's hand, was now constantly seen with her at picnics, teas, tennis-parties, and the like.

Two opposition series of summer entertainments had been kept going all through these months; and to one of them Mrs. Garrish's enemies were never invited. Consequently, Updike could not meet Angie on any occasion, and they had even ceased to bow when they passed on the street. Yet sometimes, late at night, when the streets were

deserted, Martin would march up and down under the wind-tossed maples that stood in line before her father's house, with here and there small rain-pools gleaming dimly in the road, like fallen tears; and Angie, in the silence of her room, would listen to the wind among the maples as if it were a banished lover's sigh.

Still, Martin was proud; and neither of them could give way. On a certain autumn afternoon he took Mrs. Garrish with a large driving party to the lake. They went out in a boat by themselves; and, as they floated in a sheltered cove, she said to him suddenly: "I have heard from my husband. Read that!"

He took the paper that she gave him. The envelope that inclosed it was postmarked at a village on the northern border of New York, but the sheet itself bore neither address nor signature. It contained these words:

"You have refused my claims long enough. You think I am afraid to come; but perhaps you will find yourself mistaken. I give you two days more to send or bring me the money. After that—"

Here the missive ended, leaving some sinister threat to be imagined. Updike was astonished and troubled. "Then he proposes to come back to you; is that it?" he asked.

Eva Garrish smiled with melancholy sarcasm. "He knows that I have this money," she said, "and he wants it."

Updike thought he comprehended. "I see. He wants to extort. But that's preposterous!"

"Not a cent of it belongs to him!" Eva asserted with unusual vehemence. "Besides," she added, sinking her face, "he is not really my husband."

"How is that?" Updike asked, strangely agitated.

Tears stood in Eva's eyes as she answered: "He married me under a false name, and after a time—by accident—I found out that he had done it to conceal from me his previous marriage."

"A bigamist," muttered Updike. "The scoundrel! Then you were not really married to him?"

"What am I to do?" asked Eva, sobbing. "Whom can I look to for defense against him?"

"You can look to me," said Updike, chivalrous indignation blazing from his eyes. "If he ever shows his face here, *I'll* settle with him! But why didn't you tell me before?"

Eva gave him one glance of gratitude.

"It was foolish, I know," she confessed. "But I didn't know, at first, how good and generous you could be. I dreaded to tell you my disgrace."

"Disgrace!" Updike ground the word between his teeth. "The disgrace was that man's not yours." After thinking a moment, he said: "Let me give you an instance." Then he rapidly narrated what he knew of Owen Haymaker's operations, and was gratified to see that Eva listened closely. "Now there," he wound up, "Haymaker's wife was supposed to be in collusion; but, even if she were so, the real guilt was his. Do you suppose I can blame her as I do him? I represent this claim of thirteen thousand dollars against him, for Baffler, Kidge & Co. But you can't imagine that I would demand settlement from her?"

"No, of course not," Eva softly agreed, drawing a deep breath.

"Very well," said Updike, strengthening his point. "She is a hundred times worse off than you, because you are absolutely innocent."

His ardor was well-nigh quenched in the despairing depths of Eva's eyes as they met his.

"Oh," she sighed, "if this trouble of mine had never happened; or if I had only met you again before it came!" She then collected her thoughts, as if the words that she had spoken had been merely part of an unspoken reverie.

"We must row back and join the others!" she said.

Updike drove with her from the lake in a buggy. The moon was rising, and, as they rode along, its cold, silvery rays seemed to mingle with their talk. Martin kept revolving in his mind that significant exclamation of hers; and once he burst out:

"Why do you still bear that man's name? You are free, and have a right to drop it."

She did not reply immediately, and he became aware that she was trembling. Her voice was barely audible when she said: "It is the

mark of my past, and I must bear it because I have no future to look forward to that can wipe that out."

Martin trembled a little, too. He asked himself, as if he had been a third person, whether Martin Updike was about to make an offer of marriage. But the subject was not pursued, and they arrived at Eva's house almost in silence.

"Please come in," she said, when they had alighted. "That letter—it has frightened me. I hardly dare to go into my own house alone. Besides, I have something to say."

Updike was ready enough to comply; and, when they had entered, she led the way to the library. They sat down.

"This man who wrote that letter," she began, with downcast lids, "seems to threaten something. Suppose he were to come here and rob me?"

"But he can't," Updike opposed. "I have part of your bonds. The rest are in the safe deposit."

"There is something more," said Mrs. Garrish. "I have kept nearly forty thousand dollars

in cash in that safe." She pointed to the receptacle in the wall.

"Forty thousand that you haven't told me about!" gasped the young lawyer. "It's a terrible risk."

"I know that," she admitted. "What shall I do? Will you take it and put it away for me?"

Updike shook his head. "No. That would be too great a responsibility. I have enough already."

Mrs. Garrish took out her keys. "Then you must let me do this much," she said. "If you could get for Baffler, Kidge & Co. the money that Haymaker owed them, it would help you with them. It was thirteen thousand, you said. I am going to pay it!"

"You! Why?"

"Because it will be doing you some benefit; and I feel that I am positively bound to make this much return for your stanch friendship. It fairly belongs to you to hand to your clients."

"But that sum is over one-tenth of your whole fortune. I couldn't possibly accept it; neither could my clients," Updike protested.

He was amazed at her lavish generosity; yet it touched him too, for he could no longer doubt the sincerity of her attachment for him.

She approached him with an air of intense entreaty.

"Do take it," she implored. "Do—for my sake! I should be so happy if you would."

She seemed to be in such distress that he instinctively rose and took her hand, to calm her.

"Eva" he said, "may I call you so?—I could not accept such a gift, even if I were married, and it were offered by my own wife."

"Your wife!" she echoed.

He could feel her hand quiver as it lay in his. She drew it away, and made a few steps toward the table.

"Then," she said, "I must leave this place. If I can not, at least, be of some use to you, I had better disappear. You know I have made discord ever since I came. I have separated you from some of your friends; I have done you no good; and now, if I am not to have the right to make you amends, I shall go."

"Eva!" he exclaimed, following her. "You

must not think of such a thing! You owe it to yourself to stay—and to me. I can not let you go until all your wrongs have been righted, and you are put in a clear position before every one."

She smiled sadly, yet with a sort of triumph.

"Well," she asked; "and then, after that—"

Updike had never felt so powerfully the bewitchment of her mysterious eyes. For one instant he thought of Angie; but, in the next, Eva's glance, mingled of vague question and mute sorrow, overcame him.

"After that," he answered, "whatever happens, you must—stay!"

"Do you wish it?" she asked, in fascinating submission, bending her head toward him until it almost touched his shoulder.

"I do," he replied, feeling that he was the only man on whom she could depend in her forlorn situation, aud that he ought not to fail her.

The next moment he was startled by a strong, quick, masculine voice in the parlor. Eva shrank back, and dropped into a chair.

"He has come," she said, in a voice subdued by terror. "*That man!*"

Updike turned, and saw, coming directly toward them, a man in shabby clothes, with a long, thin, black beard, who had not taken the trouble to remove his flat-brimmed felt hat.

"I told the servant I had important business, and would walk right in," this unpleasant apparition announced, as he came forward.

Eva cowered silent in her chair, very pale; but Updike burned with wrath. "And who *are* you, sir?" he asked.

The flat-brimmed individual seated himself and said coolly: "I'm only the man that had the misfortune to marry that woman," pointing his thumb at Eva. "And I guess *you* are the young lawyer that my private detective spotted hanging around her. Let's see—Updike, ain't it?"

"I am Mr. Updike," Martin responded coldly. "Take off your hat!"

"Thank you," said the man. "I don't need to. My head ain't as hot as yours."

"Probably, then," retorted Martin, "it is as

cold as your heart. I know about your pretended marriage with this lady, sir. And I know what you've come here for. You want to extort money from her. But, in the first place, you are a bigamist; and in the next place, the money belongs entirely to her."

Apparently the stranger's hands were hotter than his head; for he now began to pull off a pair of thin lisle-thread gloves.

"Go slow, now," said he. "You' have got to look at both sides. That first marriage that you refer to was entirely in fun. I supposed it was a joke, until the young lady and her folks began to make a fuss and insist that I was really her husband according to the law, because I had spoken of her as my wife before witnesses. Then I skipped; and when I met Miss Tuthill I married her under another name, because I didn't want those people to get after me and find it out."

Updike turned to Eva. "Is that story of his first marriage true?" he asked.

Mrs. Garrish, still seated, drew herself up haughtily and said, "I believe so."

"Nevertheless," said Updike to the intruder,

"the first marriage was legal, and Mrs.—I mean, Miss Tuthill—is free."

The other man rolled up his gloves, and put them into his coat-pocket.

"She may be free of marriage," he answered deliberately, "but that doesn't necessarily make her free from theft, does it?"

"What do you mean, sir!" thundered Updike, starting toward him violently. "Remember that I intend to protect this lady."

"Oh yes," said his adversary, who, as easily as if he were taking out a cigarette, drew a revolver, and held it quietly in his hand. "And I'm going to protect myself."

At this point Eva sprang up.

"Oh, Martin," she cried, "be careful! This man is desperate. I'll tell you who he is: he is Owen Haymaker!"

"Haymaker!" repeated Martin, in a dazed tone. "Is *he* your supposed husband?"

"Yes."

Updike hardly believed that she had spoken the word. But he was speedily brought to a comprehension of realities by hearing Haymaker say:

"Yes, sir; I'm the man. You must excuse me if I'm a little rough. Garrish is the name I married her under, and Haymaker is the name that dawned upon me afterward. I've had several names; but I'd no more think of keeping one name all the time than I would of sticking to an old coat after it was worn out. Mrs. Garrish knew all about the new name, though; and she stayed by me just the same. What do you suppose she did after that? Why, when I had collected about a hundred thousand in cold cash by a smart business operation, I gave her the whole boodle to carry away. She was to meet me with it in Canada. But I went up there a few days later, and she wasn't on hand. She had skipped East with the boodle; and now, here she is!"

"What do you say in answer to this extraordinary charge?" Updike asked of Eva.

She stood perfectly still; but her face looked as if it had been coated with a premature frost.

"It is all true," she said, her lips scarcely moving. "But he had cheated me; he had deceived me by a false marriage; and then he

expected me to aid him, for his own profit, in cheating others. I took my revenge by carrying away the great sum of money that he intrusted to me.

"Oh, Martin," she cried, clasping her hands, "you must believe me when I say that I did not really mean to keep it all. I only wanted to hide somewhere, until I found a way of restoring it, without being imprisoned myself. And when I discovered you here, I thought you would help me through in the end. I was tempted to delay; and this is my punishment. But you know that, just before this miserable man came in, I offered you the full amount of your claim, and you refused it."

At this point, Eva fell on her knees and moaned to Updike:

"Forgive me; oh, forgive me! It was because I loved you."

Mr. Haymaker seemingly did not relish hearing this confession. He fingered his idle revolver in such a way as to indicate that he would like to give it employment. As for Updike, he was so aghast at the double revelation thus laid before him that the sweat broke

out upon his forehead. He suffered from a sense of criminality, more than the two criminals themselves suffered.

"It's no time for such words as these," he said frigidly to Eva. "You'd better stand up again."

But he nevertheless assisted her, with much gentleness and courtesy, to rise. When she had regained her feet, she shot toward Haymaker such an icy, basilisk look that all the old charm died out of her eyes, for Updike. It struck him at once that their resemblance to agates had been prophetic.

The whole woman was as smooth and polished as an agate, but just as impenetrable; and the melting dusk that he had imagined as lurking in her eyes, now seemed to Updike—if such a thing were possible—a petrified shadow.

Eva guessed the change in his feeling; but she was determined to win a victory, one way or another. She addressed herself to Haymaker:

"You said in your letter that you would give me two days. But I received the letter only this morning."

"That ain't *my* fault," he rejoined. "I gave it to a man to carry across the Canada line, and mail. I suppose he forgot it.

"By the way," he continued, speaking to Updike, "I wrote to Mrs. Garrish three weeks ago, threatening to come here; but she thought I didn't dare to because I'd be arrested for swindling. Well, you see I have dared; and the fact that I'm here proves the sincerity of my statements to you. I admit the fraud."

"Then you're a fool as well as a knave!" Updike declared. "I will put you into the hands of the police."

"Yes," Eva chimed in, vindictively. "Mr. Updike knows all about it. He represents one of the claims against you.

"And here," she added to Martin, handing him her safe-key, "this gives you control of all that money! You are master of the situation now."

This was her victory over Haymaker. The villain, however, was not disconcerted. He twirled the loaded cylinder of his revolver between finger and thumb, making it click. "I guess *I'm* the master," he said languidly.

"You think so?" Martin inquired, planting himself directly in front of Haymaker. "Let us look at the facts calmly. If you shoot anybody here, you will have murder on your hands as well as fraud. I hold this key; and most of the property is where you never can find it, even if you commit a dozen murders. Now, sir, I'll give you one minute and a half to get out of this house."

He pulled out his watch and held it up; meanwhile eying the man and the pistol, with a strong conviction that he was likely to receive a bullet the next moment. But his only chance was to brave the thing out.

Haymaker whistled.

"You've got sand," said he. "If I clear out, do you promise not to have me followed?"

"I promise nothing," Martin replied firmly. "The hand has passed forty seconds. You'd better move."

Haymaker rose and dropped the pistol into his side-pocket again. "I ain't murdering just now," he said; "and I guess I'm mated this time. Good-night!"

Thereupon he turned and walked out of the house.

As the door closed behind him, Eva crept toward Updike, and said piteously: "What will you think of me, Martin?"

Updike shuddered as if an adder had touched him.

"Don't ask me to answer you," he said. "I am going at once by the back way through the garden to Gen. Cullender's house, to summon help and ring up the police. In five minutes I shall be here again with help."

He struggled with himself for an instant, wishing to give her some kind word, possibly to tell her that she had better fly; but he stifled the impulse, and strode rapidly toward the glass door of the library, which opened on the garden.

III.

In the early dawn there was a great whistling and chirping of blackbirds that had collected in the outlying gardens of Constantinople, preparatory to their southward flight. Updike and Gen. Cullender were closeted

together, counting over the contents of Mrs. Garrish's safe, when this cheerful uproar of the birds began; and just then a constable came to them, saying that Haymaker had been arrested near the railroad station.

Mrs. Garrish was never found: how she succeeded in getting away remained a mystery. But the chatter of the migrating blackbirds was as nothing in comparison with the gossip exicited by the strange termination of Updike's relations with her. At first it was said that he had connived at her escape; and the fact of his large bank account, which had been drawn upon exclusively to meet her current expenses, was brought up against him.

But fortunately, he was able to produce the agreement that he had been careful to draw up, witnessed by Gen. Cullender, and his own astute office-boy, showing the purpose of that account. Furthermore, having possession of Mrs. Garrish's whole property, he turned it over to Baffler, Kidge & Co. and the rest of Haymaker's creditors; so that their claims were almost completely satisfied.

Yet, notwithstanding all this, there was

much debate in local society as to whether he had acted rightly. There were those who said that he had compromised himself with Mrs. Garrish. There was a group that maintained that he had really intended to get possession of her nefarious wealth for his own benefit, but could not carry out the scheme. Another more lenient party acknowledged with regret that, while the results were good, considered merely as a superior sort of detective work (since he had secured all the property wrongfully obtained by Haymaker), Updike's methods of recovering it were reprehensible. A few people stood by him uncompromisingly, and defended his whole course of conduct.

Thus the young man, who had always been in favor of looking at both sides of a question, found himself uncomfortably enclosed between the two sides of his own story. He was mortified by the result of his championship of Eva, and humiliated by the thought that he had been ready to sacrifice his love for Angie Breese, in favor of this plausible adventuress. The Hon. Calvert was slow to give any sign

of reconciliation; but, so far as Updike could ascertain, Angie had not yet engaged herself to Eben Taft.

One day it chanced that he met her just as he was passing under the maples by her father's door. Contrary to his expectation, she bowed to him, with a smile that seemed to hold out some faint promise of forgiveness. He stopped after he had passed her, ran back, caught up with her again, and said:

"Miss Breese, you have heard all sorts of things about me, I suppose?"

"Yes," said Angie, flushing.

Her fair hair shone around her face like the halo of some uncalendared saint.

Updike's voice shook slightly: it may have been from the exertion of hurrying after her.

"Remember," he said, "you ought to consider both sides."

"Oh, yes," she answered, laughing; "I remember. But—you must forgive me—I am just the same as I always was. I can see only one side; that is, yours!"

They were married in November.

"How about the independent candidacy?" Gen. Cullender inquired of Updike a fortnight before the wedding.

"As to that," Updike answered, "I can't tell you. *I* run on the regular ticket."

OLEY GROW'S DAUGHTER.

I.

"LOOK out for a ducking now!" cried the skipper. "We're on the Rip."

Maurice Creese, crouching near him in the smack which was darting through furrows of foam, felt an added motion from the short, terrible swash of breakers rolling over the shallows like a section of Niagara rapids; and he ceased to take much interest in the low bank of sand, surmounted by a white light-house, which appeared to be dancing up and down near the boat. He was not quite over the discomfort caused by this performance, when the smack dropped her sail and brought up at the old whaling wharf, close to the houses of Nantucket.

"How about my trunk?" he questioned.

"Your *chest?*" returned the skipper, trans-

lating him. "I guess Oley Grow 'll see after that, if he's around."

"Grow, eh!"

"Yes, I tell 'ee—Grow. Anything agin him?"

"No," answered Creese. But he failed to explain why he repeated the name as if it were familiar.

A half-witted youth loitering among the tackle went off in search of the unknown quantity represented by the name "Grow," and came back with it reduced to concrete form. Oley Grow proved to be a short, dumpy man with a foreign-looking face, and a despondent expression, partially modified by what seemed a thick knitted night-cap pulled over his ears. He was attached to a heavy cart surrounded by a low railing like a ship's taffrail, which he commanded with a maritime air, holding a stiff whip upright at the tail of his horse as if it were a tiller.

"Want to move that chest?" he demanded, on dismounting.

"Yes."

Grow ran several steps, and tapped the bot-

tom of his cart energetically. "Here's the article!" he exclaimed. "This and that'll do the business for 'ee." He pointed to his horse and then slapped himself on the breast. "Now *where* do you want to go?" he concluded, triumphantly.

"I don't know exactly," said Creese, with a smile which suddenly made Grow aware that the stranger was a handsome young fellow.

The carter lowered his whip, and dejectedly waited for more information.

"Do you happen to know a place where I could board?" Creese inquired.

"How long you want to stay?"

"Two or three weeks."

Grow became confidential. "I've been a castaway myself," he announced, "and I don't mind saying I guess I can 'commodate ye, though ye *be* a townie."

"All right," said the young man, apparently much exhilarated.

He was accordingly stowed on the cart with his trunk, and his new landlord trundled him off slowly, navigating first the grass-edged cobbles of one street, then the sandy ruts of another, and

finally bringing up in front of an old house with a brass knocker and enormous wooden latch on the door. At the side was a tangled garden, thickly spotted with the color-points of flowers.

The first thing Creese did on getting to his room was to open the window and gaze out. The house had at some time been cut in two lengthwise, and one half had been slid along a few yards for the better lighting of the interior. He found himself, owing to this, placed at an angle where he could survey the rear of the garden. To his surprise he discovered, among a mass of petunias and hollyhocks, a face staring fixedly up at him. "They're going to take a look at *me*, too," he muttered.

The next moment he burst into a laugh. The face was a wooden one.

There could be no mistake; he was exchanging glances with a weather-beaten piece of oak, carved and painted into a semblance of humanity. It was nothing but an old figure-head from some ship, planted here as if it might thus sprout into a beauty it had never known before. What heightened the absurdity was that it bore a likeness to old Grow himself.

Presently, however, there was a rustling of the leaves near it. A gate in the back fence of the garden had opened, and this time it was a veritable pair of eyes, a rosy cheek, and two sweet feminine lips that presented themselves to his view. The girl to whom these attributes belonged halted a moment, smelled the flowers, then stepped out on to the path. Something caused her to look up sideways. Creese thought he had never seen so wonderful a profile. It was like a cameo, enlarged, suffused with pink, and made to breathe. The eyebrow painted a downward shade, above the eye; the corner of the lips was drawn a little back; the chin was round and strong. Her whole bearing was that of unconscious beauty, fearless simplicity; and the purplish print she wore lent these the charm of appropriateness. Her head was bare, but the abundant hair made a covering for her like a web of filigree gold. Involuntarily Creese withdrew from sight; but in a moment he heard her steps entering the house, and was unreasonably glad.

At supper she reappeared. "Then you are Miss Grow?" he hazarded, receiving no introduction.

She blushed and made no answer. "Yes, that's my Jessie," said her father. "Wife, is the beans ready?"

Mrs. Grow, who brought the beans, was a tall, sandy-haired woman; she had apparently molded her features on the indentations of Cape Cod. Yet they suggested vaguely that she had once been fair. Jessie glanced curiously at the new-comer during the meal, but spoke little. When she and her mother had disappeared, Oley Grow gave his lodger a pipe, and filled one for himself.

"Yes, my wife's a Cape girl," he said, in answer to a question. "I *told* you I'd been a castaway. Well, it's nigh on to twenty-two year that I was wrecked on the South Shore. I come from Denmark, I did. No Yankee! But"—here he grunted by way of vocal punctuation—"I married a Cape girl and stayed here. Been one of 'em ever since."

"By-the-way—that old figure-head in the garden," his listener said. "How did you come by that?"

"Part of the wreck—part of the wreck," said

Grow gloomily. "And so am I. It's been here ever since—like me: hey?"

"Haven't you gone ashore—to the mainland, I mean?"

The carter shook his head.

"Then I suppose you're pretty well satisfied where you are?"

Grow shook his head again. "I haint paid for this house yet."

"Not paid! In how long?"

"Twenty year."

"And how much do you owe still?"

"Three hundred dollars and some interest."

"Oh, well," declared the young man, sanguinely, "that'll soon be all right."

He retired that night in a reflective mood, full of a dim romantic project too impulsive to bear analysis, but, for all that, delightful.

II.

"What can he be up to?" queried Aunt Deborah Macy, when she came down next day to talk over the new lodger.

"Most likely thinkin' to fit out a ship," said Mrs. Grow, sheathing her knitting-needles in

their quaintly carved case made of a whale's tooth.

Others believed he was purchasing "sheep rights" to start a grazier's business; for in those days sheep-raising was still a Nantucket industry. It was rarely that they had an "off-island" visitor of Creese's type to discuss, and the inhabitants tried hard to unravel the mystery about him. But he kept his counsel, and the only topic he showed interest in was that of Mrs. Grow's family connections.

Instead of two weeks he stayed more than a month, and still gave no sign of going. He grew familiar with the place, and loved to wander about, looking at the queer, mossy-shingled dwellings, the venerable windmill on the outskirts, and the rolling downs beyond. He lived in the sea and sky—endless spaces of changeful water and constant ether, overhung by idle clouds, or softening, sun-illumined mists; and before long Jessie became for him the one object on the horizon of this dreamy demesne. Her delicate color, bright hair, free naturalness, all accorded with the prevailing

atmosphere, and he idealized her into a kind of embodiment of it.

They went out often together in row-boat or sail-boat; Creese, who prided himself on his seamanship, assuming control. One day they rowed to the neighboring island of Tuckernuck—"That's silly Indian for bread-loaf," she explained—and in coming back, as they rounded into the harbor, Creese found the tide so forcible along the shore by the "bug light," that he could not advance.

"Give me the oars!" cried Jessie. She sprang from the stern, and he had to surrender.

With a few strokes she carried the boat out of the current.

"Bad place for a man to fall overboard," he remarked.

"Don't you try it, then," said Jessie, "when I'm not here to help you." And she laughed heartily.

"I'd better not try anything without you to help me," said he, as they drifted back to the wharf.

To this she paid no attention; but when they were walking up the street she asked:

"What's your business, Mr. Creese? Appears to me you're caught here in a dead calm."

"Oh no; it's a very live one," he assured her. "I'm doing a great deal."

"How?"

"Well, for one thing, I'm falling in love—"

"Oh!"

"—With Nantucket, you understand. But, by-the-bye, I've something to say to you and your father to-night about business."

"Business?" she repeated. At that moment a peculiar sound took Creese's attention. It was the blatant piping of a tin horn, which proceeded from the tall church steeple near them.

"Who's gone crazy *now?*" he asked, as if it were an incidental matter.

"Oh, that's the crier, you see. He's sighted the New Bedford packet. I shouldn't wonder, too, if 'Lish Gardiner was on board."

"Lish Gardiner? I haven't seen him before, have I?"

"Good reason, too," said Jessie "He's been away a year, on a *croosse*."

"A cruise? What makes you think he's on the packet, then?"

"Oh, I know it!" declared the girl, with emphasis.

Maurice fancied a light of pleasure and excitement in her face; though perhaps it was only the sparkle which the swift wind and the salt air and sunlight might bring out. He began to be uneasy. But nothing more was heard of "'Lish," that day.

After supper Jessie turned eagerly to Creese. "Well, what was it?" she demanded.

"Oh, the business!" he responded, breaking off a reverie. "Yes, yes.—Mr. Grow, have you ever heard of Manton Macy?"

Oley pulled at his pipe. "Yes," he said, with the mien of a man not to be daunted even by the complexities of Nantucket relationships. "He was my wife's half-brother's cousin—I may as well tell ye, second remove. I never seed him, though; *I'm* a castaway, and he lives off into Boston. Know him yourself?"

"He's dead," Creese answered.

Oley shifted his position slightly, and called to his wife in the kitchen. "Hear that, Sarah? Your cousin Manton is dead."

Mrs. Grow promptly appeared.

"Well," said she, thoughtfully, true to the instinct of an economical mind, "he can be spared just as well as not."

Tears came into Jessie's eyes. "Oh, father, just think of it!" she murmured. "That poor old man dead—our own cousin, too!"

Creese waited a moment, then resumed: "You know Mr. Macy was rich, Mr. Grow. He has left your daughter a thousand dollars."

The carter rose excitedly. "Sheer off!" he shouted. "The luck's coming too close. You mean it true?"

"Perfectly. I've only been waiting for the will to be proved, and certain points to be cleared up, before telling you. This is the business that brought me here."

"Well, well," said Oley, correcting his manner by a touch of melancholy; "I didn't know he had such a good heart. If I had 'a known it, I'd been sorry to have him die."

Jessie meanwhile looked to her mother for help; and Mrs. Grow put an arm around her, as if dire catastrophe had befallen her child.

"I'm a lawyer," Creese went on, "assisting to settle the estate. In a few days a check for

the amount will arrive, and then I shall have to bid you all good-by. I congratulate you, Miss Jessie, on your good fortune; and you, Mr. Grow; for now your daughter can liquidate the debt on this house."

Oley's eyes danced in spite of him. But Jessie, in the bewilderment of the occasion, made no response to this proposition of paying the debt.

III.

Early the next morning, the "townie" was walking the north beach in deep reverie. All at once something whizzed through the air near him, and was gone.

"Hullo!" he cried out; and raising his head he beheld a sturdy islander with a red beard and gray shirt, flinging into the sea a line terminating in a large, formidable hook and a heavy lead, which he had just whirled recklessly around his own skull.

"Hullo!" said this personage in reply. "Who are you?"

"Oh," returned Creese, "I'm another fellow; that's all."

"Glad to hear it," the fisherman answered.

"Trying for bluefish?" Maurice asked.

"Mostly," said the other. "They're such damn Injins, though, you never can tell when they'll bite." Two shining finny trophies, however, lay on the sand at his feet.

Creese passed on. At breakfast there were two fresh bluefish steaming on the platter. Oley looked across at his daughter and said, "Lish caught 'em this morning."

"So-ho!" thought Creese. But he observed that the name of the mysterious 'Lish no longer brought vivacity to Jessie's face.

It happened an hour later that he saw this identical youth of the red beard entering the house. He himself was in the garden, and waited to learn what might follow. In a quarter of an hour 'Lish issued again, looking strangely distraught, and walked away.

The simple fact, which Maurice did not then know, was that the sailor had approached, full of hope, to meet his sweetheart for the first time in a year. But she received him coldly; 'Lish withdrew in perplexity; and it was not until he met Oley, and was hailed by him

from his taffrailed cart, that he heard of the legacy. Then he understood everything. "We're rich now, 'Lish," old Grow said, vainGloriously, "and my house 'll be my own."

"Ah, that's it," muttered the poor fellow, as he fared home. "She's got some money; so she looks down on me." And his heart sank like a lead heaved in thirty fathoms.

Only three days after this, Creese made ready to say farewell. But, on a pretext, he got Jessie out into the garden, and there began talking with abrupt earnestness.

"Before I leave," said he, "I want to tell you one thing: that is, I mean to come back here."

"Oh, how nice!" said Oley Grow's daughter unaffectedly, glancing her blue eyes at him. "When?"

"That depends on you. If you really are glad, you might give me a good reason for coming back."

"I?" She confronted him with eyes so wide open and cheeks so pink, that she seemed to have revealed herself then for the first time.

"Yes," said Creese. "I have found in you something I never thought to find here. Meet-

ing you has been like coming upon some beautiful, perfect shell in the midst of the worthless sand. That's what you are to me, Jessie; do you understand? And now I have found you, I want to keep you. Will you let me?"

"I—I never heard any one speak so before," said the girl, faintly, in a tone of innocent wonder.

He took her hand. "Shall I come back for you in the spring?" he asked.

"I hope you will come, Mr. Creese—if you want to."

"And you will promise to be my wife?"

She drew her hand away, and covered her face. Then turning full upon him again, she nodded slightly. "I'll promise," she said, and the next instant she darted away to the house.

Creese was very happy; yet he smiled at the strangeness of this consent. Left alone, he stared at the old figure-head, thinking that it might offer some response to his joy. But in its half-resemblance to Grow it appeared to oppose him with an inane sort of gloom, and he retired in dissatisfaction.

Still, before he left the island, everything was arranged to his liking. Jessie renewed her promise more deliberately, and it was agreed that her parents should not be told of the engagement until his return. "They will feel badly," he said, "when I tell them I'm going to take you to Boston; so we won't let them know just now."

A constraint fell upon the household after he had gone, for Oley awaited, day by day, some motion on Jessie's part to assist with her money, and she made no motion. A certain hardness seemed to have come over her, and she lived withdrawn from her parents. Indeed, it was only too clear that what she considered wealth had developed in her an unlooked-for pride; and her father was himself too proud to assail this. He continued to navigate his nautical cart about the quiet streets; slowly, patiently, and with a settled sadness.

"What's the matter, pap?" 'Lish Gardiner asked him one day, halting him on the road. And little by little Oley allowed the cause of his silent grief to become known. "Jessie's ma she tried to wheedle her," he added; "but

'twa'n't no use. Jessie she said as the money's hers, and— Well, to-morrow's interest day, and I'm comin' short on my payment."

"Never mind," said 'Lish. "I suppose it's hers to do with as she's a mind to. I don't blame Jessie, pap. 'Taint for poor devils like me to judge her. I did hope— But there, that's all emptied out now. I'm in a corner. Of course she don't want me, now she's rich. But keep chirk, pap, keep chirk."

That night, when the two women had gone to bed, 'Lish rapped at the wooden-latched door, and insisted on handing Oley a small roll of bank-notes. "That's what I got for my lay on the croosse," he said. "'Tain't much, for they didn't treat me fair; but then I guess it'll help some. I meant it for Jess, but—Now don't you say nothin' to Jess about it." And grasping the carter's hand in his own, he retreated without giving time for a refusal.

I am not sure that something like a stifled sob did not mingle with his footsteps, as he hurried down the sandy street in the darkness. But old Grow, sitting in his chair alone, seemed to feel the house that he loved, and

had worked so hard for, becoming warm around him with the gratitude that filled his heart.

IV.

'Lish went seldom to see the Grows, after winter set in. He had quietly abandoned his suit for Jessie's hand, and did not like to meet her on a new basis of distance. During the cold months Oley had little employment; but when spring came he once more mounted the cart and resumed his plodding. "How tired and old poor father looks!" mused Jessie, as she saw him start off. But the resolve to keep her money stifled pity.

At last, on a cool March morning, when the winds, racing over the Nantucket downs, began to wake the island to life again, and the chilly sunlight showed strange greens and purples in the ruffled sea, Creese re-appeared, as naturally as if he had been a sea-gull alighting,

"Oh, I'm glad you've come!" Jessie gave him greeting. "I was beginning to feel so sad—I don't know why."

"Yes, the separation has been trying," he

confessed. "But we have had each other's letters; that was one good thing." And yet, as he spoke, a disheartened, anxious feeling came over him, for somehow Jessie's letters had not been all that he had wanted them to be.

Oley took the news of the engagement quietly. "Marry Jess, hey? Well, she can act her pleasure. Goin' to settle on the island, then, be you?"

"Oh no; she'll go with me, of course, to Boston. I can't leave there."

Oley began to laugh incredulously.

"You'll never," said he, "get Jess to live on the continent. No, no, no. She's bound to stay by Nantucket; you can't rub *that* out."

"But she has agreed to go," Creese persisted, with a smile which he thought rather superior to the old man's laugh.

Nevertheless, a few days developed in him the suspicion that a change which promised no good had taken place since the summer. The island looked dreary, this time; there were no flowers; the crude simplicity of life with the Grows, instead of interesting him as it had done, grated on his sensibilities. Moreover, it

struck him that there was a change—slight, perhaps, but shadowing—in Jessie's manner toward him. Was it that she repented her promise, or that he had invested her with traits she did not possess or had partially lost since the first meeting? He did not know from which side the trouble came, but he began to be sensible that the sea air and the land air did not blend perfectly in their relation.

In one thing she differed from most Nantucket women; she liked to be on the sea, or walking near it. Strolling along the beach with her, Creese stopped beside the wasted ribs of an old wreck buried in the sand. "Some one else has been down here," he observed, lazily. "See those foot-prints. The boots that made them have gone around the point."

While they were contemplating these marks the boots returned from behind the low hill, bringing with them the stalwart figure of 'Lish. Seeing the two, he stopped in some confusion, and said: "I was thinkin' to myself I must come up and see your folks, Jessie. I'm goin' away again."

The girl caught her breath, Creese thought. "So soon, 'Lish!"

"Late or soon, it's about the same," said the sailor, fixing his eye on the wreck's hollow ribs as if he wished they were his own. "'Tain't much use my lying around here."

"When do you sail?" asked Creese, attempting the cheerfully benevolent.

'Lish's manner became on the instant fierce. "In a fortnight," he growled, and at once strode away toward the town.

"'Lish don't mean to be rough," said Jessie, impulsively. "I know he don't."

Her lover made no reply, but began to talk of their plans. Jessie however, hardly listened to him. "What's the matter?" he asked at length.

"I don't know. I'm sad again to-day."

"Your father thinks you won't want to leave the island. Is that it?"

"N—no, I don't believe it is."

"What, then? Are you thinking about 'Lish?"

Jessie looked at him gravely. "Yes, I'm sorry for 'Lish," she said.

"Are you so much interested in him?" asked Creese, frowning.

Her pensiveness vanished. "Why, it's 'Lish that's interested in me," she explained, with a laugh. "How you do turn things round!"

But Creese was not contented. They went home in silence, and he left her at the door. On crossing the threshold she met Oley, to whom she imparted what 'Lish had told her. He at first looked calm, but speedily concluded to be violent. "I know what it means," he declared. "The boy 'll never come back again; and it's all you!" He grew red with the effort to suppress what he wanted to say; then burst out: "Do you know—you, girl—what he did while you were hugging your dollars? He came here and—" So the old man went on until he had disclosed 'Lish's clandestine generosity.

"Oh, father!" Jessie moaned, struck with contrition. "How wicked I've been!"

"Yes, you have," retorted Oley, immitigably. "And I wish I'd never been cast away, and then you wouldn't 'a been born." Having said which, he made haste to leave her, with a

smarting at his eyes, and a conviction in his heart that he was very glad Jessie had been born, after all.

"I'm not fit to live," she told herself, bitterly, creeping out to the desolate garden. "I've been so proud and mean, and done wrong to everybody. And I see it all now. I wouldn't even have hearkened to Mr. Creese if I hadn't thought myself so fine. Oh, I can't—I can't marry him! And how am I to tell him?" She twisted her hands together in distress, while she made this confession aloud, to the passive figure-head, through a mist of tears.

Then, finding no relief, she bethought her of a desperate measure. There was the sea—the sea that she loved, and that would not reproach her. She would go and throw herself into it, and her father, who wished she had not been born, would be glad to have her die.

She unlatched the back gate, and sped across the salt meadow straight for that place where she knew the tide would be running out most strongly, so intent on her purpose that she was unaware of some one watching her, and did not even notice the gathering clouds

and fierce gusts of a rising storm. But as she neared the shore a sight met her eye which compelled notice. The harbor bar was white with a cataract of foam. Even the waves inside were high, and out amongst them was a cat-boat which the squall had just struck. It spun half around, lurched, and filled. Jessie saw that it must sink, and at the same instant she thought she could recognize in the man on board, who was preparing to leap out, her accepted lover, Creese.

There was a small boat on the sands by the bug-light, and she determined to attempt his rescue. Casting one mechanical glance about her for aid which appeared impossible, she saw a man running toward her and hallooing. It was 'Lish, who was bringing another pair of oars.

No time was lost. They both got in, and rowed together with the tide toward the place where the sail had already gone down.

"Yes, I knew 'twas he," said 'Lish, while they were pulling. "Saw him go out. None but a townie 'd ha' done it in the face o' that sky."

They had almost reached the dark spot of head in a hollow of the waves, when it sank. It had gone down only for the first time, however, and when it rose Creese was hauled vigorously into the boat. He had fainted, and his eyes stayed shut. While Jessie was trying to revive him, 'Lish said, quietly:

"I was passing by the garden then, Jess, and stopped ahint the bushes when I saw you. I heard what you said out loud there."

Jessie was betrayed into one look that showed him she might yet pardon this offense. Then, "Oh dear," she said, "do you suppose Mr. Creese'll come to? I want to tell him something." As soon as he revived she began. "Are you all right?" she asked. Creese smiled a faint affirmative, and she went on impetuously: "I *must* say it, Mr. Creese. I can't marry you—really I can't. I'm so sorry, but it was all a mistake, and I'm very wicked. Will you forgive me? Don't you think you might?"

He smiled again, with something of amusement in spite of his feebleness. "Only get me ashore," he said, "and I'll forgive every—" At this point he shut his eyes once more.

When he had quite recovered, and had heard all she had to say, "I see now," he agreed, "that it would have been impossible."

"Yes," said Jessie, "the wind can't blow two ways at once."

"I did something for you, at any rate," he continued, "in bringing you that legacy; and now you've saved *me* from drowning."

"'Twas 'Lish did it," she declared.

"I don't know how I can reward 'Lish," said Creese, with commendable lightness. "But you might do it for me, by marrying him."

He was ready to take his departure by the next packet, and as he stepped on board he said to Oley:

"I'm glad to hear from your daughter that she has paid off the mortgage, and I hope she won't be too lonely while her husband is on his voyage."

"Oh, he aint going far this time," said Oley, lifting his whip with a commanding sweep worthy of Neptune's trident. "It's only in our own Atlantic Ocean!"

CAPTAIN BILLY.

I.

A BIG man was Billy Rust—"Captain Billy." His build resembled that of a freighting schooner, and if you saw him from the front, his broad chest, standing boldly out in strong muscular development, suggested the prow of such a vessel bearing down upon you in a rather threatening way. But he seldom really threatened, and he was not inclined to pick quarrels. He had an accommodating roominess of temper that made him seem to be always living out of doors; and the weather in that atmosphere was exhilarating even when rough. For a time he followed the diver's trade. Once, being engaged in some submarine work which required pushing, he arranged —since he was at some distance from home— to have a special messenger sent by boat to give him the earliest notice of a certain impor-

tant event which there was reason to expect would occur. When the messenger arrived the captain was under water. The workmen above signaled to him, he responded through the signal cord, and was slowly hoisted to the air. The helmet of his diving-suit was unscrewed for him, and the first word he uttered on being released was "Well?"

"Good news!" said the messenger. "It's a boy. He was born this morning."

There was a momentary silence. Captain Billy looked down at the stone platform on which he was standing. Had it not been for the grotesque appearance imparted by his swollen diving-suit, one might have thought he was struggling with a new emotion; but the struggle, if there was one, was stifled under that weight of hard rubber. Presently he looked up again: "How's the mother?"

"Doin' first rate," was the reply.

"All right!" shouted Captain Billy, in lusty accents. "Lower away, boys." So, with his helmet made fast again, he disappeared beneath the waves.

And yet some people called him hard-

hearted. But had he not made a great effort, in his way, to meet the occasion? He entertained, you observe, peculiar notions of duty and was prompt in making up his mind as to where his own duty lay.

This incident happened a number of years ago. The son, whose advent he received in so Spartan a manner, grew up into a sturdy young fellow, and acquired a knowledge of the waters along the Atlantic seaboard which delighted his father's heart. Captain Rust was good to the boy and to his mother. The baby was launched upon the sea of life with a name which, it is true, was somewhat top-heavy, for they christened him Alonzo, but this was promptly cut down to "Lon." How often his father carried him in his massive arms, flinging him up toward the sky and then plunging him downward again as if to initiate him into submarine mysteries! What pangs did he not gladly undergo, when the little fellow, crowing with pleasure, laid hold of his parent's thick beard and pulled at it as vigorously as if it had been the main sheet of a sail!

No wonder that, after a long experience in

exercises of this kind, "Lon" should feel at home when rocking on the billows or handling nautical cordage. While he was yet a lad he began to make trips on coasting vessels; later he served an apprenticeship on a New York harbor-tug, and finally he rose to employment on a pleasure-yacht.

Nevertheless—must it be admitted?—Captain Billy was not entirely satisfied with his son. He fancied that there was something effeminate about the young man. The dreadful suspicion had entered his mind that "Lon" was allured by the knowledge that there were other classes of society than that into which he had been born and that he was disposed to ally himself with those classes which were commonly called "upper." In a word, Captain Rust feared that his son might be willing, if opportunity offered, to merge his sterling identity in the vague, neutral commonplace of "superior" people.

Now, Lon had been brought up to believe that "all men are free and equal," nor had it ever been pointed out to him that the freedom and equality referred only to questions of

political and property rights. As a natural consequence, he believed that the sons and daughters of all men were free to make choice of one another as companions, without trammel. He had no idea that it could be a descent from his high standing as a seaman on a pleasure-yacht that he should fall in love with the daughter of the man who owned the yacht.

Hence, quite inadvertently, he fell in love with her—poor, innocent fellow!

It was on board the *Ripple*, in which Mr. Meadows, a wealthy contractor and engineer, was making a trip through the Sound to Newport, Nantucket, the Beverly Shore, Mount Desert. Evelyn, his daughter, was with him, and one of their guests was young Beeny, son and sole heir of the great cotton speculator. Now, Beeny appeared to be much interested in Miss Evelyn, and for this reason, but for no other, Lon was interested in Beeny. Keeping a keen watch on their graceful, subdued flirtation, his first clear knowledge of his own sentiment came from seeing the slender Beeny help Evelyn over the side one day when they

were entering the yawl to make a landing. The young man held her hand in his, at the same time lifting a parasol to protect her from the sun. Was it mere fancy, or did Lon guess aright that the speculator's son bent the parasol down a little so as to conceal his action, while he raised the clasped hand close to his lips?

A shock of jealousy ran through him, and I can imagine that his gray-blue eyes flashed with a fiery spark. Beeny did not have it all his own way after that; for, standing on the forward deck, Evelyn often talked with the sailor lad, first about the boat and rigging, the winds and sky; afterward about other things, such as his father, himself and his adventures.

"Why, he's not a bit like a common sailor!" she exclaimed, speaking to her father.

"No, dear," said Meadows. "You don't suppose I'd hire common men on the *Ripple*! Lon is a very good boy— a sort of toy mariner. That's the kind I like."

Evelyn did not seem entirely pleased. "How silly, papa! You know that isn't so. Lon is perfectly *real;* and he's so bright and— and—humorous; and he has read a good many

books—a whole bunkful, he said. I think it's *we* who are the toys."

In short, he became a favorite with Evelyn. She liked his handsome presence, the fine, steady color in his cheeks, his frank, original remarks, and his simple deference toward herself. It resulted that he was often detailed to attend her and carry messages for her when the yachting party were ashore. Is it supposable that all this time he was unaware of the "gulf" which, in the dialect of romances, "yawned between them"? Most likely he saw it with some distinctness, but it makes a good deal of difference which side of a gulf you are standing on. Lon was so eager to cross this chasm that it did not seem very wide. Besides, he had won his own position by hard work, and he considered it much closer to that of Mr. Meadows than Mr. Meadows would have thought it. But, then, as to Beeny? The youth obviously possessed some puzzling, unreasonable advantage over him. It seemed, though, to arise only from his having more money and being used to society—mere accidents, which had nothing to do with deep affection.

The golden days of summer idleness were melting away into receding distances as the *Ripple* bore homeward, and Lon felt that with those days Evelyn, too, was slipping away from him. It was here that he faced a practical difficulty. How to speak to her? how see her alone? When she talked with him on deck some one else was sure to be not far off—one of the other sailors, or stalwart Meadows with his newly-bronzed cheeks and branching mustache, or little Beeny with his intrusive eye-glass. He could not seek her out. Discipline and social laws made him, instead of free to act like a man, as helpless as a woman waiting for her lover to offer himself.

An accident favored him. The night before they made Whitestone, where Meadows and his guests were finally to leave the yacht, he had taken the wheel for the second watch. Evelyn, at a late hour when all the rest had gone to bed, finding herself wakeful, came up from the cabin to get some air. The night was clear and starry; the water rolled away from the yacht in low undulations that were lost in

a noiseless vista, where they seemed to touch the shores of dreamland.

"Oh, it's you," said Evelyn, recognizing him in the faint light.

"Yes, Miss Meadows." Lon was secretly rejoiced by the tone of calm approval with which she had noticed him.

She walked a few moments along the deck, then came back and seated herself on a camp-chair near by. "How fast we go!" she said, gazing at the whitish water that swelled and fell away behind the stern; "I shall be almost sorry when this is over."

"So shall I," Lon responded, as heartily as if it was "Ay, Ay," to a command.

"Why, Lon?" (It was the custom to use his first name.) "You can go on sailing and sailing always, can't you?"

"Not on this boat, Miss Meadows."

"Why not? Surely you—you haven't had any trouble with my father?"

"Oh, no." He looked very steadily at the binnacle, whence the lamp-flame glowing above the compass streamed out, suffusing his face with rosiness that might have been taken for a

sudden blush. "No; but I think I'd like to get married!"

"Oh!" said Evelyn, startled by so unexpected a confidence, and, after a pause, "Well, I'm glad it's only that. Papa can engage you next summer, just the same."

"No, I'll not come back. My father 's pilot on a ferry in East River. I'll go and work with him, I guess." Lon waited an instant before adding: "Maybe I won't see any of you again."

His voice betrayed his hidden grief, and Evelyn was perplexed.

"That's a pity," she said slowly. "I thought you were always going to be on the *Ripple*."

She was greatly disappointed. Her ideal sailor was to be taken away from her, and she could almost have cried. She understood now what it was to lose him as a "toy." And, strangely enough, this idea of his marrying, instead of pleasing her as a pretty romance, had almost a depressing effect. "I do wish," she declared, girlishly, "that people wouldn't always be marrying!"

"Don't you think a sailor like me has a right

to marry?" asked Lon, more roguishly, recovering spirit.

"Oh, I suppose so," she admitted, reluctantly, "if he really loves some one enough,"

"And wouldn't *you* marry a sailor if—if—well, the same?"

Evelyn started up. "What do you mean? Don't you know that you have no right to ask me such things? Please remember that you are only one of papa's men."

Lon, still at the wheel, stood more erect. "I am my own man," he said firmly. "And I know I have one right—to say what I feel. Don't take offense at my way if it ain't the best. Miss Meadows, I—" But here he stopped. However slight the barriers of class and position might be, he found that the barrier between a man and woman, when passion is to be aroused, remains formidable. Still he rallied his courage with a great effort. "It's you I want to marry, Miss Meadows. I love you!"

She withdrew hurriedly a few steps, putting her hands up to her face. "Oh, this is dreadful," she murmured.

It occurred to her that she ought to be

severe; but how was she to do it? Should she say: "I'll tell my father"? Should she address Lon haughtily as "Mr. Rust"? No; that would be absurd. She might, then, retire into the cabin without a word, and ignore everything. But while she was considering her course, he spoke again.

"You needn't be afraid," he said gently, but with some bitterness. "I can't come after you. My hands are tied. I am bound to this wheel here."

How true in another sense! He was bound to it as to a wheel of torture. Captain Billy's son, like the captain himself, knew his duty and stuck to it.

This impressed Evelyn as a curiosity—a lover who could not leave his post even to follow up his suit. Moreover, it was rather pathetic. She felt sorry for him. Advancing some paces, she contemplated him earnestly, while he remained holding on to the spokes of the small wheel, glancing at the compass and anon making the circle revolve a few inches. Presently she came up and almost touched it with her hand.

"Oh, you foolish Lon! Can't you see that, because I liked you as a sailor, it was not a good reason for your having such thoughts?"

The brave young steersman literally quivered under the restraint of his position; but lifting his eyes he said, as steadily as he could: "I haven't got any thoughts, Miss Meadows; I only love you! I love you twice over. I've done fairly well for a poor man, but if I only knew you cared about me, I'd make my way further. I'd work like a dog. I'd do anything for you."

A new idea struck Evelyn. She asked: "Would you leave this wheel now—for me?"

"I couldn't do that," he answered, shaking his head. "It would be shirking."

Somehow his reply unnerved her. She could not be cruel to him. His fidelity and simplicity touched her; and then he had spoken with such earnest warmth, such absolute devotion. What was that strange, rushing sound in her ears? Was it only the warning whisper of the water speeding by the yacht? It grew louder and louder. Could it be that it came from the tumult in her own

heart? There was something so manly, so convincing about this honest young sailor, that she trembled; trembled for fear that, after all, she might love him. And now she spoke softly:

"I am sorry. Don't say anything more to me! But I don't wish you to feel badly. Oh, if I could have guessed such a thing, I never would have come out here! There; you may take my hand—once; though it's only to say good-by to you. It is useless to think of such a thing, you know; but you may write to me and say how you are getting on. And, oh! your father—you have told me so much about him. I should like some day to see him. Good-by."

So she was gone. What had she done? She could not sleep again that night for thinking of what had happened; whether she had not been too lenient, and whether there were not some sentiment in her heart that she dared not confess. Lon, for his part, felt the blood burning in his veins; partly with shame and mortification, so that he was ready to jump into the sea; partly with ecstatic triumph,

because he had revealed his love. The stars shone whitely, the waves murmured, the sails hung like huge specters above him; the boat appeared to fly with redoubled speed, and to him, watching there, as to Evelyn, lying wakeful in her stateroom, that brief scene which had just passed came back like a momentary, incoherent vision.

II.

THE next night, having quitted the service of Mr. Meadows, Lon reached his father's house, a small wooden dwelling on the outskirts of Brooklyn. In one of the windows there was a green shade, and in the other a red one, so that the light from behind made them look like the larboard and starboard lanterns of a ship, and gave the place a familiar, home-like air. The captain greeted his son with gruff cordiality, but it was not long before he discovered that something had gone wrong, Lon was so cast down. In a few days the young man made full confession to him.

"Now, look here, Lonzo," said Captain

Billy—he always said "Lonzo" when he wanted to be severe—"you'd better steer clear o' them kind o' craft. If you don't, you'll have a collision, and then, first thing you know, down you go!"

But the son was not to be dissuaded. The more he reflected, the surer he was that Evelyn's last words in their strange interview contained a germ of hope for him; and he obtained sympathy from his mother. She was a plain, placid woman whose fixity of expression bore living witness to the artistic truth shown in the carving of figureheads; but she had what figureheads do not possess—a tender heart—and she steadily sustained Lon against the captain's frequent grumblings. Captain Billy, however, was confirmed in his opinion that Lon would "go down," by the way in which Lon began to lag around and neglect work. Sometimes he accompanied his father on the ferry-boat and sometimes he talked of getting employment, but more often he was mysteriously absent and declined to give any account of himself on returning.

Evelyn might have explained some of these

absences. She received a letter from her sailor, to which she at first gave no heed; but one day, on a visit to a friend at Staten Island, she went out to practice archery by herself. Just as she had bent the bow and sent an arrow flying, a figure in blue appeared at the edge of a thicket behind the target. Evelyn uttered a cry of fright.

"Did I hit you?"

"No," answered Lon, coming forward. "I was wounded before, that night on the *Ripple*."

She consented to talk with him. He offered to pick up the arrows for her while she shot; and in the end she agreed to meet him again. This circumstance solves the mystery of a certain inexplicable catboat tacking on and off near that spot, some days later, and of a vailed woman who, coming down to the shore, was taken out for a sail past Bergen. They met often after that at various places; there was no longer any concealment between them of their love, but it had to be secreted from every one else, and each time that Evelyn saw him she resolved that it should be the last.

Who would have suspected, seeing her calm

womanly face, with a sweet severity about the innocent eyebrows, that she carried such a great anxiety in her heart? In due time young Beeny piped out in a thin voice the proposal of marriage which he had long been meditating; but she refused it with facile composure. The men whom she met in society were no more to her, now, than so many black-coated silhouettes. Lon was her one reality; and yet what was she to do with him? where would it all end? No hope was discernible, unless by elopement; and from that she still shrank. But every night she lay awake a long while, and often she would listen to the mournful notes of the steamer-whistles on the river, blending in a wild harmony of discord while the vast city was sunk in slumber. She knew that Lon frequently took his place on one of the boats at night as an assistant pilot; and these prolonged tones, calling through the darkness over the roofs and streets, were like a distant hail from him—a sorrowful voice of separation and struggle.

Meanwhile, day by day, Captain Billy went on conducting the ferry-boat to and fro, eight

hours out of each twenty-four; silent, diligent, unnnoticed, unknown. Thousands of people were borne from bank to bank without ever thinking of his existence. It never crossed their minds that over and over again he saved them from some imminent peril in that short and seemingly safe transit. The great white boat moved like a gigantic swan across the greenish flood, or, in times of fog and snow, like a ghostly bark freighted with beings who might have been fancied to be floating as disembodied spirits on the strait between life and death. Captain Billy, up on top, knew all about the hair-breadth escapes, but performed his function without noise. The world beneath the waves was as familiar to him as the world above, and in a quiet way he felt that he was master of both. But as he knew what grim things underlie the surface, you can imagine that he did not care much for superficial show, or greatly value "social position." In fact, he distrusted them.

He had been lecturing Lon about these things as they came down to the half-past 11 relief on a cold day of early December.

"Lonzo, strikes me you ain't got any bone left, or gristle either! You're pinin' after that gal, and you go mewin' round like a puss-cat waitin' for some one to take you up and coddle you in her lap, side of the fire. If you're set on't that you want to marry her you ought to shin 'round and make a pile o' money. But when you made it, t'wouldn't be worth much. What's it good for with them folks, except to throw away? You'd ought to stand by your own kind; not let yourself down to that sort o' folks. Splice yourself with my old mate's gal, —Jim Ryerson's gal! I'm ashamed of you, Lonzo. You was a baby once"—the captain's voice softened a bit. "But I don't like to have you a baby now!" he ended, vociferously.

Lon made no retort, but he was very sulky when they went on board and mounted to the wheel-house. Other ferry-boats were seen plowing to and fro, like huge shuttles cast back and forth, weaving together the strands of life that connect New York and Brooklyn. The weather was bright but freezing; cakes of ice were jostling and jouncing about in the

river, going seaward. Otherwise, everything was as usual.

In the ferry-house, too, everything was as usual. There was the huge, dreary waiting-room walled with glass windows, its bare floor gritty with dust from many feet. There in the middle of the floor, with its misleading air of riotous luxury, was the bronze-gilt fountain that never plays, and across the room could be seen the soda fountain that plays perennially above the bloom of apples and the waste desert of tinted popcorn. Cloaked and hooded men and women came in, miserable, transitory, and expectant, as they always are at ferries. A pale young man with Christian Association side-whiskers stood by the door ostentatiously opening letters and reading them with immense importance. A man with an artificial leg busied himself by walking to and fro, while the people with natural legs carefully sat down on the bare, iron partitioned benches. His spurious limb at every step sprang up, gave a sideward shake, and flopped down methodically on the planks, its owner bowing his head and regarding the performance with grave atten-

tion. At the last moment Evelyn entered, dressed in simple braided black, with a blue veil over her face and a blue scarf crossed on her bosom. She was coming home from an early call in Brooklyn. She knew that this was Lon's ferry, but she had made no appointment with him; and he was not aware that she was to cross at that hour.

III.

THE boat started serenely. There was nothing remarkable in her progress until she had gone a third of her way. Then the bell from the pilot-house rang for her to slow down so as to permit the passage of a tug with a heavy barge in tow. The engine was stopped and she lay waiting. The tug passed safely, but was hindered by the blocks of ice some distance down; her line to the tow slackened, and before Captain Billy had time to reverse the engine, the barge—caught in an eddy—veered toward the ferry-boat and crashed into her.

Now the steamer was of the old-fashioned build, without compartments, and Captain

Billy knew that unless the leak could be stanched she must sink. He ran for the stairs to go below, and Lon was at his heels. They plunged into the hold nearly together. Hasty efforts had been made by the engineer and the rest of the men on the lower deck to close up the break, with boxes, matting, and whatever lay at hand; but they could not collect enough stuff to block the opening. A narrow space in the midst of the improvised barriers remained vacant, and unless that could be filled every soul on the boat was doomed.

Captain Billy threw himself impetuously into the gap among the torn and jagged timbers. His broad, burly figure filled it completely and he held the greedy river back. But, unfortunately, he had thrust his right arm out of the opening.

"Dad! oh, dad! Get out of here. Let me take your place. Get out, I say."

So rang Lon's cry, and Lon took hold of his father to wrench him away.

Captain Billy answered:

"Lon, you fool! Don't you see we're safe? I can't get out of here without letting her sink.

Take the wheel, Lon. You know how. Don't let her drift. Run her into dock!"

All this while he was shaking off his son's grasp. Lon fell back, overpowered.

"I'll *take* her in!" he cried, all afire.

"Right," gasped his father, "I was mistaken, Lon. You're not a baby. *You're a man!*"

Lon flew up the steps, and regained the pilot-house. He took the wheel. By this time the tug had freed herself and was out of the way with her tow. Lon started the engine, and with steady hand and eye alert guided the heavy ferry-boat up stream into her course, then across and then downward with the swing of the tide, adroitly, accurately, into her landing-place. The bell rang to slow; again to reverse; once more to unhook; then to go forward by hand; finally to stop. The boat was docked as by the skill of a master. But while all this was proceeding, Lon's nerves tingled with the most horrible shudders, because he knew that his father was down there in the gap, stemming the death-cold water with his own body.

A carpenter had come, with some boards

gathered at haphazard and some oakum. Captain Billy surrendered his post to the carpenter, and was carried up the engine-room stairs faint, half-frozen, with his right arm lacerated and bleeding from contact with the floating ice. But, once on his feet, he refused aid, and walked nonchalantly toward the office. The rumor of his bravery had preceded him, and an agent of the ferry company met him at the door.

"Captain Rust," said the agent blandly expanding with a noble sentiment, "you have behaved like a hero! The company will appreciate your services, and on their behalf I will hand you in a minute or two a hundred dollars."

With his left arm still intact, Captain Billy waved the agent imperiously aside. "Hundred dollars! What do I want of that? D'you think I cared anything for your rotten old boat? She might have sunk for all me, if it hadn't been for the women and babies on board! I don't take money pay for what any *man* ought to do."

And thereupon he strode forth into the

street, blazing with indignation and followed by Lon. He had his right arm dressed and bandaged; and he formed a resolution; which was, to resign his place as pilot.

Meadows heard from his daughter, that evening, the story of the accident and the fortunate escape. But restless reporters had learned of the affair, and the next morning all the particulars were given in the papers.

"By Jove!" cried Meadows, not recalling at once the name of his former sailor as being the same as the captain's; "what a noble fellow that pilot was! I must hunt him up, Evelyn, and see if I can help him somehow. Why, he saved your life!" The contractor almost gave way at the thought that, but for Captain Billy, he might have been sitting alone at his breakfast-table, the light of his life gone out and his lovely child, Evelyn, dead. "If I could meet that man I'd do anything under heaven for him!" he exclaimed.

Evelyn responded with enthusiasm, but she was very pale, and her expression was inscrutable.

Meadows had not been long in his office

down town, when Captain Billy Rust walked in and said that he had come to answer an advertisement for an assistant in some submarine building work on the seashore. The captain stated his qualifications, and said that he was experienced. Meadows cross-examined him severely and decided to engage him.

"Ah—what is your name?" he asked sternly, like a man whose function it was to catalogue the human race.

"Captain Rust, sir—William A. Rust."

Meadows sprang to his feet. Handsome, tall, with long, high-boned cheeks and a waving mustache, the ferocity of which concealed the real good-fellowship of his nature, he looked at this juncture the very embodiment of hearty kindness. "Captain Rust!" he cried. "Then you are the man who saved my daughter's life yesterday on the ferry!"

"I don't know anything about your daughter's life," said Captain Billy.

"My dear fellow," said Meadows, "I'm glad to see you! I had it in mind to find you today. What can I do for you? Consider yourself engaged by me from this moment. But

isn't there something else I can do to show my gratitude?"

"No, sir," said Captain Billy. "I ain't asking for any gratitude."

Meadows knew enough to pause at that point. But it was only a few days before Captain Billy was informed by his son that the girl with whom he was in love was Miss Evelyn Meadows.

"Look here," said he to Meadows soon after, "you asked me if there was anything you could do. I don't want nothing for myself, but I hear that my boy Lon wants to marry your Evelyn. I dont believe in 't, I'm free to say. Howsomever, if they're both willin', suppose we fix it up."

Meadows's philanthropy vanished on the instant. "My daughter marry your son!" he shrieked, his fierce mustache gaining a monopoly of his genial features. "You must be crazy!"

"No, *I* aint crazy," said Captain Billy, "but I guess Lon is. I'm goin' to stand by him, though."

A violent outburst ensued from Meadows,

but Captain Billy remained quiet, and the question was postponed. Meadows conferred with Evelyn.

"This is all very nice," he said, "up to a certain point. But it was the captain who saved your life, not Lon. You can't marry the captain, you know, because he has a wife already, and has had for a good while."

"Like father, like son," Evelyn answered, twisting the proverb: "*I* like the *son*."

So, much against the will of both Meadows and Captain Billy, the union of the two young people was at length brought about. Captain Billy consented to waive the dignity of his class, and Mr. Meadows meekly surrendered the privileges of the wealthy order.

And the ferry-boats went on, like shuttles thrown from side to side, weaving and weaving the web that unites two cities and mingles people of all classes together. And it transpired that Lon, who took service in the work which his father and Mr. Meadows had in hand, was a very efficient man of business and became the mainstay of Mr. Meadows in his office; while Captain Billy—now master of a

tug of his own—had all he could do in superintending the recovery of submerged vessels, or walking at will all over the bottom of the Sound in his elephantine diving-suit, to locate the position of lost ships and cargoes.

Long afterward I met Captain Billy and asked him about these occurrences.

"Oh yes," he said, "I remember. Darned fool I was to keep my arm outside and get it smashed! Might just as well have held it inside." On being pressed for particulars he referred to his old log-book, always punctiliously written up, though not required by any authority.

"Le' me see," said Captain Billy, turning the pages. "Here it is! *December 7, left Brooklyn 12 M. Struck by barge. Went down below and stopped leak.*"

That was all.

MRS. WINTERROWD'S MUSICALE.

"WHO'S Mrs. Winterrowd?"

There is a question that shocks me as I write it down. Nevertheless, it is what my friend McAloon (who had the misfortune to be graduated from a Western college) asked me, when I told him we had an invitation to her musical affair of Wednesday evening, January 18.

Of course nobody else needs to be told about her; but I had to explain to McAloon that Mrs. Winterrowd, though not herself famous, knew many famous people, and that, although she was not the mother of her great-grandfather, nor in any way responsible for him, she had done the best she could for that gentleman and for herself by being descended from him, and was fully aware of her meritorious conduct. He, you remember, was no other than General Killamy Matchett, an early commander of the Valiant Horse Fencibles

(one of the first military troops formed in the province of the Massachusetts), who won great distinction by having predicted the revolt of the colonies, and then dying comfortably at home before the outbreak of hostilities. Mrs. Winterrowd has, among other heirlooms, General Killamy's sword, with which he would probably have slain many British oppressors had he lived.

The Matchetts were very good at inheriting or marrying property. They were distinguished, and it took all their time and energy to supply the distinction; therefore those who married them had to furnish the funds. Mrs. Winterrowd's husband is descended from a fine old typical Boston merchant, and is wealthy, of course.

When I had finished enlightening poor McAloon on these points, "I feel a great deal better," he announced; "for, however insignificant I myself may be, I am now sure that there is somebody in the world for whom it is worth while that it should go on. But will you explain why it is called a *musicale* instead of a music party, or simply a musical?"

"That is Mrs. Winterrowd's style, my dear fellow," said I. "Don't you appreciate it? It is like the mark of nobility implied in saying inva*lide*, instead of invalid. That single letter e added to the word musical marks all the difference between your hopeless Western crudity and the refinement of centuries."

"I see," said my friend, meekly; and I think he was prepared, after that, for the felicity in store for him.

When the evening arrived, we repaired to the dignified mansion on Commonwealth Avenue where this delightful party was to take place. One of the very first persons I met in the drawing-rooms was Sophia Morne, a very lovely girl of great attractiveness, whom I had promised my companion much pleasure in seeing. She is a little white, but not enough so to detract from her peculiar beauty, like that of an old portrait, always young. Her dress also was white, with many clever liues breaking up the surface, and giving a chance for artistic trimming, puffs, folds, and soft shadows. Her hair is unlike almost anything I have ever seen in others; being brown, yet

with a kind of brightness about it that makes it look as if some beam of light were playing upon it, and just about to vary its hue a trifle. She wore it drawn up from the forehead that evening, and at the lower tips of her ears you saw the gleam of very small topaz gems. All this added power to the sweet, thoughtful eyes, the plaintive repose of her mouth, and the grace of those delicate cheeks which I never can help fancying are made thin by some unknown sadness, until I see her smile; and then the notion takes flight.

I wonder what Planetsure, the eminent scientist, thought of her as he stood there talking to her, with his hands, like relics of the Stone Age, tightly clasped across the very recent deposit of dress-coat that covered his back? The two were very deep in some severe discussion; but Miss Morne bowed to me. I confess I should have been unhappy if she had not done so.

Our hostess, to whom we had said good-evening, passed me just then, bearing McAloon to the large room at the rear, where the two pianos stood. I soon saw that she

was going to present him to Miss Fetters, the brilliant authoress, whose books one ought not to read without standing on glass bottles, to lessen the electric shock. Turning away rapidly to avoid watching him in his perilous position, I came upon the Reverend Griswold Porbeck, with his mild smile and arrogant, spectacled upper face. In fact, the apartments were filled with people intellectually, socially, or otherwise notable. Then here was Mrs. Orton West, at whose house the meetings of the Knotty Point Club are held, and Miss Truesdale, secretary of the Women Engineers' Society; Leverett, who published a poem of eight lines in one of the magazines last autumn, and has been so lionized by the ladies ever since that he is afraid to print anything more; also that charming Miss Mignon Stanlow, the heiress, who looks so exquisite in her half-mourning. Here too was Miss Yarrow, the poet's daughter, who scanned all the young men as if they were very imperfect rhymes for her—all except Jim Torringford, who has grown a British beard, and has become a most insufferable snob, since leaving

college. But even there, I remember, we used to call him "the Bull pup," because of his trotting after English models so subserviently. It is not likely that all these people really knew or cared much about music, but they wished it to be understood that they did.

Suddenly there was a stir. Messrs. Rall and Tando (two professionals, who, distinguished as they are, were nevertheless immensely flattered at being invited to perform here) were seen seated at the upright pianos like leaders of hostile forces in the transient hush before battle. They were about to begin a duet. With a blind crash the attack opened. Their fingers plunged into the keys in a truly awful manner, as if they were imbruing their hands in human blood. They glared, almost snorted, dug at the ivory, and—as the pianos were placed back to back—seemed to threaten plowing their way straight through the rosewood breastwork, and engaging in combat at short range. When Rall flung his head back in an agony of feeling, Tando leaned forward over *his* key-board with eager exultation. And when Tando bade fair to have everything

his own way, and was sweeping the field with a succession of stormy martial chords, Rall watched his opportunity and pounced down with a sharp volley of high notes which completely routed his opponent.

When peace had been restored, I got Mac away from Miss Fetters, and presented him to Sophia Morne.

"And you are very musical in Cincinnati, too?" she half queried, while her topaz earrings gave a quick flash with the swift turn of her head. "They even say that you are carrying off the honors in that way now from Boston and New York."

"I see that they have hardly convinced you, at any rate, Miss Morne," said he, noticing the doubt in her voice.

"I don't know; I've never been there. I've heard a great deal about it, though, from some friends. And I should *so* like," she recommenced, with unforeseen enthusiasm, "to see Cincin—"

"*Should* you?" inquired my friend, at once eagerly responsive, leaning forward impulsively.

"I—I think so at times," Sophia answered, all at once eying him a little more distantly.

"You are fond of music," he resumed, in a rapid, perfunctory tone. "What did you think of the duet?"

Sophia said, candidly and with a little smile, "I don't like it."

Hereupon McAloon and I confessed the same. I saw that these two people would soon come to a good understanding, and never before that moment had I been fully aware how handsome my young Westerner was.

The situation must have impressed Mrs. Winterrowd, too; for had she not her niece Bertha staying with her, for whom a brilliant match was but a natural destiny? She came up and interrupted.

"Miss Morne is a veritable protestant in musical matters," she began. "She is always trying to reform us; she will never give up to the orthodox opinion if she can help it. I remember you were firmly opposed to Von Bülow," she added, turning to the charming culprit.

My friend's eyes lighted again. "And you prefer Rubinstein?" he asked.

Miss Morne was not afraid to give a quiet assent.

Then began the usual patter about Joseffy, Marie Krebs, Von Hammer, Van Pummel, and the rest, which I have myself been through so many times. I escaped to the neighborhood of Miss Stanlow, observing at the same time that Bertha Matchett had moved nearer the group, with a friend. In a moment or two more her aunt, accidentally discovering her, had entrapped McAloon.

"What an unfortunate name?" exclaimed Miss Stanlow, when I mentioned it to her.

I was surprised to find that the remark gave me an unaccountable comfort, although I had not known till that instant that I stood in need of any. Could it be that I was the least particle jealous of Mac?

"Ah, Miss Stanlow," I half sighed to the graceful creature at my elbow, "why are we forever talking about something and professing to care for something that is really of secondary moment? Don't you get dreadfully tired of it?"

"I'll tell you the exact truth," said she. "I get tired of almost everything except the Diagonal."

I laughed, and yet I believed her.

"I hope you include your partner," I continued. "The last time I danced the Diagonal was with you at Mrs. Shaw Stevenson's. Don't you remember?"

Was it more than ordinary intention that caused Miss Stanlow to answer, with a full, dark glance, "I have not forgotten, Mr. Endicott"? There is a species of subtle understanding between two good waltzers who are in the habit of dancing together, unlike any other *rapport*. It may lead to further sympathies, or it may remain always exactly the same. For a moment I fancied this pleasant waltz sentiment of ours might be budding into something else. (And why not? Mignon had money enough for us both.)

"Ah, now we are to have the quartette," I heard her saying in the midst of my transient reverie.

The quartette had the effect of waking everybody up. All the distinctively musical

people got together in groups and held animated confabulations. The words "opus," "sequence," "high color," "polyphony," "shading," and the like, echoed on every side; and young Stiles went about telling all the people he hadn't said it to before, how exploded the Beethoven mania was.

"One of the new interpretative composers," Miss Stanlow murmured to me, with her half-cynical smile, "ought to write a 'Conversation Symphony,' descriptive of musical criticism in a drawing-room, translating it into sound—"

"And fury," I threw in.

"Signifying nothing?" queried my companion.

At this point, however, we went down to supper. Mac had succeeded in getting back to Sophia Morne, whom he took down, and Miss Stanlow and I, coming behind, could hear them conversing in a tone of agreeable intimacy, which I didn't altogether relish.

"No," he was saying, "I quite agree with you that this is not the pleasantest way to listen to music. One needs a little more soli-

tude. In fact, a single sympathetic companion is enough. Don't you think so?"

"I'm not sure," was the answer. "But at least that shows you don't demand a great deal."

"It's well to be moderate," he laughed, quietly. "Still, what I ask for is not so easily found."

The supper was superb, and the Reverend Porbeck, warmed with secular wine, entertained a select group by descanting on Greek music and old Church anthems (his favorite theme at these parties, while Rall and Tando cooled their jangling passions in plates of ice-cream. Then we went upstairs again, and had some more music. Last of all on the programme came Virgin, our new composer—a most lovable fellow, though sad and ill from his long struggle with popular indifference.

"God pity a genius like Virgin," exclaimed McAloon, as we walked home, "if he has to wait for recognition from that whimsical circle!"

"Then you didn't enjoy the party?" I in-

ferred. "Why not? Tell me what you thought of the people."

"Well," said he, restraining his usual impetuosity, "they were almost enthusiastic, after supper."

"Go on," I urged him. "But at least you'll admit they were critical."

"Frankly," he replied, "I thought the company made a merit of their apathy; and when they at last began to feel and enjoy to a slight extent, they flattered themselves they were giving discriminating praise. Poor Virgin! I wish he'd go out to Cincinnati with me. I wouldn't like to be in his shoes."

"By the way," I asked, "don't you compose at all?"

"Hardly."

I forgot to mention, before, that Mac was himself a pianist of great endowments; the most brilliant amateur I think I ever heard; but he had forbidden me to let the fact loose upon Boston.

We were crossing the bridge over the swan pond in the Public Garden, when he burst out, a good deal as if he were striking a full chord on the piano:

"Great Heaven! that girl's eyes were worth all the melodies I ever heard."

I was not perfectly ingenuous, I suppose, in asking, "Whose?—Bertha Matchett's?"

"No; Miss Morne's. You haven't said a word about her since we left Mrs. Winterrowd's," continued my emotional comrade, almost with petulance. "Can you see, think, and feel, and yet keep silence about such a dream of a woman? Do you do this and profess to be alive?"

"I profess, but I hope I'm not really alive," said I, "for in that case I'm a mistake not easily repaired."

"That's your Boston way of keeping your sentiments to yourself, I suppose," he retorted. "But tell me something about Miss Morne, can't you?"

I assured Mac that she was of excellent family, but that "family" had nearly been her father's ruin. *His* father had suddenly lost his money, and the younger Morne had had an opportunity to go to the West at a very favorable time, and enter the pork-packing business. But his relatives had all opposed it, on the

ground that poverty and the scraps of a social prestige in Boston were infinitely preferable to seeking a new fortune in so questionable a field.

"What business were the Mornes in?" asked McAloon, rather gravely.

"It used to be called groceries, but on Morne's account we now call it, in a general way, 'importing.'"

"Oh!"

"He's doing better at this time than he has heretofore," I went on. "He took the advice of his relatives, and has spent his whole life and strength trying to cling to the edge of fashionable society. I think it's been a hard position for his daughter; but she has been well treated."

He soon saw her again. I took him to call at the house some days later. He didn't seem to mind in the least that the white paint of the old street door was blistered all over by age into a fine crackle; nor that Sophia's father was a shallow old gentleman in an emaciated coat, who wore a mildly alarmed expression, as if forever fearing that somebody would remem-

ber that one wrong impulse of his youth, and would get the impression that he *had* gone into pork-packing after all.

Very soon Mac began to have ideas that conflicted with mine about the disposition of our evenings, and it ended in his going his way, and my going mine. Of course I knew what this meant. Meanwhile I was fortunate enough to have another delightful evening of waltzing with Miss Stanlow.

Mac pretended (so I thought) to be very much occupied with some business ventures. He was continually running down to Devonshire Street, and looking for the latest reports of sales in the papers. It was hardly possible that these interests should absorb his evenings; but one night when he gave me to understand he was going to talk things over with his broker at the Tremont House, I sauntered out toward Bowdoin Street, with some intention of calling on Miss Morne.

As I came near the house I paused. Then suddenly from within some penetrating notes of a piano rolled forth. No, not "rolled;" I ought to say stalked, for they came like ghosts

to me. I felt my friend's hand in the touch. He seemed to be working with those sounds a spell of warning and disaster against me. Oddly enough, I felt it impossible to seek admittance at the old crackle door after this.

"An unfortunate name," Miss Stanlow had said, and I consoled myself with the words. Do what he would at the piano my friend could never throw any music into "Mrs. McAloon;" and I said to myself persuasively that Sophia would never be induced to accept that title.

It took very little time for the secret of Mac's musical prowess to get abroad, after he had betrayed it. Mrs. Winterrowd began to make a tremendous fuss over the discovery. "I shall never have any confidence in you again," she declared to me, with playful rage, at Mrs. Orton West's kettledrum. "You knew it all the time, and ought to have told me. But I don't believe you have a bit of music in your soul—no, not a bit."

But she did what she could by giving a dinner, and chaining him to the piano for exhibition after it. In fine, she made a lion of him,

insisted on his accompanying Bertha and herself to various entertainments, made him perform at a charity matinée, and assumed the part of having unearthed his genius, and even of having pointed it out to Mac himself when he was hardly conscious of possessing it.

Seeing this, certain old ladies of the Back Bay settled it in their minds that he would soon be offered up to Bertha Matchett. But they were destined to enjoy a greater surprise. One day when I had got back to our rooms from a committee meeting at the club, and was soothing my nerves with Apollinaris and a cigarette, Mac came striding in under great excitement.

"Endicott," he cried, in his nervous, musical manner, closing and stretching his long fingers as he glared at me, "you have a great many fine girls in Boston."

"I don't need to be told that."

"Some of them are beautiful," he next remarked.

I again mildly assented.

"But only Miss Morne has a soul!" he wound up.

Here I felt obliged to protest. "My dear boy, you are aware that I have a sister here, several cousins, and—"

"Oh, yes, yes," he said hurriedly, "I suppose they have souls, some sort of souls—that is—you know what I mean, don't you?" I'm afraid I looked negative; but his eye fell on the piano; he darted at it, sat down, and swept the keys with a wild sunny strain, which he wouldn't take the trouble to finish; and then he whirled around and looked earnestly at me. "The fact is," he said, "she has consented. I'm going to marry her."

I threw away my cigarette and looked at him seriously.

"Heaven and earth!" said he, jumping up. "Does it it affect you so badly? What's the matter, old fellow? You don't congratulate me."

"I will, as soon as I've taken breath," said I. (I was wondering how Sophia had reconciled herself to the name.) "Here's my hand," I continued. "Since you have won Miss Morne's, take mine too."

"That's a queer form of congratulation," he

said, presently. "I wonder what it means?" Then, in a solemn tone: "I think you cared more for her than you ever told me."

"You jump at conclusions, Mac."

"But if you did," he went on, "why didn't you take her before I came in your way?"

I hardly know what moved me to go on, but I said: "Granting your assumption, if I had asked her to have me, she couldn't have afforded it."

McAloon's eyes grew smoky with battle. "Do you mean to insult her, Endicott—or me?"

"Neither. Take it *andante cantabile*. I think Miss Morne is the loveliest creature in the world, but I never offered myself to her—no. You know well enough, Mac, that I'm a man of expensive habits, with a small and droughty income."

My friend still looked displeased. "I don't see anything in that," he said.

"But don't you understand, there are traditions—duties to society? I've told you what Morne sacrificed; how he has struggled to keep his place in our circle, and so on. You don't imagine I want to put myself in the same

position? I dare say Miss Morne has had enough of it, too. But with you—why, the whole affair is very different."

Mac's face darkened. The man's moods changed as swiftly as those of a sonata. He had entered the room in a whirl of delight, suffered a disappointment, grown angry with me; and now he fell a prey to suspicion.

"So you think she is willing to marry me because my father is rich?" he demanded.

"I say nothing of the kind. No, I don't think it. It doesn't present itself to me in that way at all."

"Nevertheless"—he began, but walked away to the window, and looked out in a threatening manner. "This is damnable, Endicott," he muttered, suddenly coming back and looking contemptuously at the Apollinaris bottle.

"What is?"

"I'm completely upset. After what you've said, it must be so. At any rate, I shall never feel certain. I've always thought it foolish to bother myself with such ideas, but it does make a great difference. If Sophia has been influenced—"

"Listen to me," I interrupted. "Why should you inquire? You love Miss Morne. She has accepted you. It is to be presumed that she returns your feeling; and, without flattery, I don't see why she shouldn't. There is no obstacle to your union, so—In fact, that's the whole story."

But,"It's not so easily settled," he insisted, and went off to his own room.

I was still thinking it over and trying to analyze my own feelings (if I had any), when he came in again, and after walking about a little, halted by the fire-place. "That was so, was it?" he began. "You never proposed to her? If you had, it would have been better. I should feel more confidence."

"Mac," said I, "I have just one thing to say, and that is, drop your doubts. I'm not going to discuss this subject with you any further."

"No, I didn't mean to," he returned, to my surprise, apologetically. "I drifted back to it. What I came in to speak about is quite another thing. You mentioned your income just now."

"Yes, but—"

"Wait a moment; you'll see that has nothing to do with it. I am surprised that you don't improve your affairs."

"How?"

"By speculation. For the last month, while I was uncertain whether Miss Morne would have me, I have found I must have some excitement, besides music, to distract me. So I have been falling back on my business streak. I took flyers—copper, gold, railroads, whatever I could get into. The result is, with what I've turned in and what I carry, I'm ten thousand dollars better off than I was."

"*Ten thousand!*"

"Yes. And you can do the same."

"Nonsense. You know I can't risk any money in that sort of thing."

"You needn't risk your own. I'll lend you what you like."

"But if I should lose it—"

"Never mind. As I tell you, I've made this profit, and if I lose the whole, it wouldn't matter; so there's no sort of reason why you shouldn't take a part, and lose it, if you prefer to do that."

The proposition was so abrupt that I hardly knew how to receive it. I could see, however, that he was bent on my accepting it. So I thanked him, and agreed to borrow two thousand.

He gave me the sum in a draft on his father, and we went down to the broker's in Devonshire Street, where I invested to that amount; but, from a perversity I couldn't wholly account for, I went very lightly into the mines and railroads Mac had chosen.

For the next four days the state of the market was, as Planetsure said when I described it to him, like a geologic convulsion. But my luck was astounding. On reviewing my condition, I saw that my gains were very nearly sixteen thousand dollars.

At the very moment when I was trying to comprehend such good fortune, the broker received notice from his bank that a telegram had come, saying Mac's draft had been dishonored.

"What can it mean?" I exclaimed.

"Very extraordinary," said the broker, fingering the note he had just read. "A man of

Mr. McAloon's standing! There must be trouble ahead."

"And so I lose my investments?" I inquired.

"I should be glad to take them," said the broker, who was a club man. "But you'd better sell off enough to recover the two thousand and commissions, and retain the rest."

"Sell off every penny's worth, then," I besought him, "and give me what belongs to me."

The order was carried out at the second board.

"Your friend's stocks have fallen off badly," observed the man of business, meanwhile. "And now this dishonored draft—" He drew in his breath and looked puzzled.

"Yes, so I have observed. Mac has been losing every day, while I've been gaining. It is very queer luck."

My rapid sales caused me some loss; but after paying what I owed, I came away with about thirteen thousand.

Then I went in search of my friend. He was alone in an upper room at the club, and he too had received a telegram. It was from

his father, and ran thus: "Wheat combination treacherously broken. Falling market has cleaned me out."

"Cleaned him out!" I echoed. "That means he's ruined, doesn't it? But it can't be. I thought he was worth two or three millions."

"That doesn't make it any pleasanter," said Mac, rather bitterly. "He *was* worth it, as you say."

"Well, I've got a mere atom of a fortune here in my pocket," said I drawing out the broker's heavy check. Let me assist you." And then I told him of the dishonored draft.

He smiled, with a wan look. "You don't owe me anything, then. It's good of you to offer help; but I've got something left. My stocks have tumbled horribly, but"—here he figured rapidly with his pencil on the margin of a newspaper—"they still leave me something like thirty-seven hundred altogether; and perhaps they'll come up again."

"It's only fair," I insisted, "that I should hand you enough to make us even, since I'm indebted to you for all I have made."

Mac tore off the penciled margin, twisted

and crumpled it, and seemed to be thinking of something else. "No, I'd rather not," he said, at length, decisively. "But have you reflected, Endicott, that I shall now have an opportunity to solve my doubts?"

Here was a man wrapped up in his passion!

"No, I had hardly thought of that," I said.

"Well," he went on, in an altered tone, but trying to appear cool, "I shall release Miss Morne from her engagement—send her a note this very afternoon."

He darted, as he spoke, an almost fierce glance at me, as if he held *me* responsible for this state of things.

"Possibly you're right about the money," said I, paying no attention to his manner, "but you're utterly wrong about Miss Morne. Why need you give her up?"

This he received with a grating laugh. "Oh, *you* advise me not to, do you?" he inquired, incredulously.

I could not doubt any longer that he had been smitten with an insane jealousy of me. "I don't give you any advice," was my answer. "I merely asked you a question. It seemed

to me that, as you understand business, and have some capital left, you could go on speculating and recover yourself."

But the odd mixture of the artist, the man of fancy, in this keen-witted Westerner promptly negatived the notion. "It was an excitement with me, not a trade," he declared. "I can't afford it now.

I ceased to urge him

"Do me a favor," he requested, abruptly. But if we had been on the stage, I should have inferred from his aspect that his part required him to stab me the next moment. "When I have freed Sophia, go and ask her to marry you."

"Mac, this is very distasteful," I remonstrated, though it was exactly what I had been thinking of. Surprise sometimes forces a man to be a humbug.

"Very," he returned, sardonically. "Probably it is as much so to me as to you. But I mean it. It will be a great satisfaction to me."

"I should never think it, to look at you," I observed, with some cruelty.

"Very well, then," he retorted, in a smothered tone, "consider that you would be inflicting a savage wound on me if that pleases you better. In either case you won't need much urging, I see," he added, with a sneer. "Do you agree?"

"I agree to retain the liberty that belongs to me, nothing more," said I, now thoroughly angry. And yet I pitied him.

When I was alone I began to think he deserved a defeat. The question whether I could administer that defeat next grew to have a dangerous fascination. I fell asleep late at night brooding over this; and when I woke in the morning I was filled with an ardent desire to test it.

Mac appeared at breakfast exhausted and unnerved. "I sent the note," he said shortly, and relapsed into silence. After a while I asked him whether he had any idea what he should do in the future.

He held up his long hands. "Here's my living," he said.

"What? Music?"

He nodded.

Neither of us wanted to talk. A constraint almost like that between strangers had come between us, and it was clearly better that we should separate promptly. I therefore took care to spend the day away from him. And a very strange day it was.

Finally, when evening came, and I was on my way to the old house with the white door, I knew that I had resolved to offer myself to Miss Morne.

It was a point of pride with her, I suppose, to receive me, though she did not look in her usual spirits, by any means.

"Of course you know of the misfortune," she said at once—"that Mac (she had adopted that diminutive) has become a poor man?"

"Yes, and that something else has happened also."

Her eyelids fell. "Then he told you what he meant to do?" she responded, almost in a whisper.

If one can pity and admire at the same moment, that was what I did in watching the soft shadowy blush upon her cheek. She was dressed in pale brown silk, judiciously trimmed

with white lace of a heavy pattern; three rose-buds bloomed at her belt, and the color of the pink ones was darkly repeated by a garnet pin partly hidden in the lace near her throat. If the costume had been expressly designed to blush in, it could not have been better.

"Yes, he has confided in me," I answered. "Are you willing, Miss Morne, to do the same?"

"What a very singular question!" said Miss Morne, with something of sternness in her eyes as she lifted them and glanced quickly at me. "That would be a different thing altogether. And what have I to confide?"

" I am anxious to know what you are going to do."

"Going to do?" she smiled. "That's more singular than the other question even. I don't know why you should ask me these things."

"I hope," said I, "you understand that I wouldn't ask them without very special reasons."

"Ah," she returned, dropping into a more easy defense, "then he has sent you? That was very wrong."

"No, he did not send me," I made answer, embarrassed.

"You are mysterious." And again she smiled. But the sadness I had been wont to fancy in her cheeks was really there now, and these faint smiles did not drive it away. "But I will be frank, at any rate. Papa was greatly troubled at first, but I think he is rather relieved now. He appeared to think that Mr. McAloon would insist on the engagement, but now he is convinced it won't be so."

What had convinced him, I asked myself? Evidently his daughter's determination to receive no overtures to a new engagement. This, then, was in my favor.

I resumed: "Miss Morne, my reason for those questions— Ah, I came here this evening—"

But in the very act of uttering my purpose I abandoned it. I can hardly describe the feeling that arrested me. There was something atrocious in taking advantage of Mac's misfortune, something abhorrent about having thrown the dice, as it were, for this woman, which I had been too much excited to compre-

hend until then. But it all revealed itself to me at that instant.

"Ah, yes, do tell me what you came for. It is so mysterious," said Miss Morne, with innocent perplexity.

"What I want to say," I replied, as if continuing, "is that I think you may do Mac an injustice. It was a generous impulse, no doubt, that made him write that note, but I'm sure he is regretting it at this moment passionately. If you had seen his face at the club—"

She threw out her hand with a brief gesture of pain. " I would rather not hear this," she said.

"Only let me say," I concluded, "that he already has a plan in his head for putting himself in better circumstances. If you would permit me to encourage him to come and speak with you about it— Oh, I know it's a great liberty."

"It's very kind of you," she answered. "I understand. The liberty I can forgive, Mr. Endicott. But I have no message for—for him."

Mortified and rather puzzled, I talked a

little of other things, and then got up to go. But as I did so I ventured to say, "Those rose-buds are wonderfully fine. If you could forgive two liberties in an evening, I should ask for a bud."

"The tea-rose?"

"No, the pink." She disengaged it and gave it me.

"If Mac has been a trifle insane," I reflected, as I walked home, "I have too"; and I was quite at a loss to understand my own conduct fully. As for Sophia, I likewise began to suspect her. How account for her obdurate unwillingness to have Mac come and make amends for his note, unless she preferred to lose him along with his money?

He was playing stormily on the piano as I entered, but stopped and burst into violent laughter on seeing me. "Sit down!" he cried. "I have the oddest story to tell you."

"I have something to tell you, too," I interposed.

But he insisted on my listening first. The constraint that had cramped our intercourse for a day or two seemed to have vanished.

"Where do you suppose I have been?" he demanded. " I've been to see Mrs. Winterrowd. What of it? Well, you shall hear"; and he proceeded to relate how he had called in Commonwealth Avenue, and received Mrs. Winterrowd's condolence on his father's failure.

"But I hope he will soon get over it," she had said.

"The inconvenience is only temporary," Mac had assured her. "As for me, it is a shock, annoying and all that, but nothing more."

The patroness of music and lions expressed her delight.

He went on to make formal acknowledgment of many kindnesses during his stay in Boston. "I don't know how to thank you for giving me that opportunity to play at the charity matinée," said Mac; and she took it in good faith. "But, after so many favors, I am emboldened to ask one more."

"Ah!" Mrs. Winterrowd raised her noble eyebrows with a very charming expression.

"Yes, a very important one, a very serious one," he explained, "in connection with your niece."

Here the lady became pleasantly and becomingly grave.

"You will permit me, Mrs. Winterrowd, to speak plainly of my admiration for Miss Matchett. She is a very lovely young lady."

"Ah, as to that, we shall agree admirably," answered Miss Matchett's aunt.

"The favor I have to ask may have an important influence on my future," said he.

There could no longer be any doubt. "Ah, Mr. McAloon," replied Mrs. Winterrowd, "I can easily understand that, and upon hers too."

"You do me too much honor," said the young man, humbly.

"But before we talk of this," she continued, in a tone of most tender confidence, "don't you think it would be well to hear more from your father? It saves so much care to have one's future clear."

"Ah, but that's precisely what I want to settle now," said he.

"Naturally," said the matron, throwing herself lightly into the mood of youth. "Young people feel that there is only one question of

importance to be settled, and in one sense that is true. Believe me, I fully sympathize with you, and I appreciate the import of this one question. It might perhaps be answered now, but my duty to Bertha, you know—"

"Your duty, madam! What has that to do with my giving Miss Matchett music lessons?"

Mrs. Winterrowd returned his feigned astonishment with a very real equivalent. "*Music lessons!*" she cried, in horror. "You, Mr. McAloon?"

"Undoubtedly. I must make my living in that way, now, and it would have an important influence on my success if you were to give me your patronage."

"I see I have completely misunderstood you. Then that is really to be your future! Very odd; very odd." She already began to scrutinize her former lion with a distant, undervaluing air. But there was a vein of Yankee sharpness under her superficial grandeur, and a bartering scheme had occurred to her. "Possibly I can assist you," she began, "but of course you did not propose—you had not thought of compensation? The adver—

I mean, the reputation it would bring you to be giving my niece instruction would repay you for the time, I dare say."

"Unfortunately," answered Mac with a touch of indolent magnificence, "my prices must be rather high, and I could hardly afford to enter into such an arrangement. We shall have to give it up, I'm afraid."

"There's *one* city finished off, then," I exclaimed, after hearing this recital. "You never can do anything in Boston now."

"I don't want to, either," he declared vehemently.

"I have been to see Miss Morne this evening," I said, lighting a cigar.

All his gloom returned in a moment.

"But she won't have me," I added.

"She has refused you?" demanded he, bounding to his feet, and clutching the piano with one hand.

I hesitated; then I said: "You seem to take a special satisfaction in humiliating me. You heard what I said. Of course it was absurd to expect she would consider me. Are you content to let the thing rest as it is?"

Mac pulled out his watch. "Confound it! it's too late."

"What for?"

"To go to the Mornes,"

"*Allegretto—finale!*" I exclaimed. "Aren't you rather rushing the thing? Apparently you forget that you're not engaged any longer."

"No, I don't," said my hasty friend, "but I want to be. I can show Sophia that everything may still go well if she—that is, that I shall make a success of some sort in music."

His doubt and jealousy had passed; the transient cloud between himself and me was dissolved; but I can't say I was altogether pleased with this business of his retiring in my favor for a day or two, and then fancying he could resume his romance. "You have offended her," I said. "It may not be so easy as you imagine to put off and take on this engagement."

But "Heaven helps fools like me," he asserted, "and frustrates wise men like you, Endicott." And I'm inclined to think he was right.

When he had gone to see Sophia the next day, I occupied his absence with a carefully constructed theory of the impossible, to wit, her becoming a music teacher's wife. When he returned, my theory was nowhere.

"And is this the end," Mr. Morne lamentingly asked me one day, "for which I have spent all my life trying to keep a position in society?" But his asides to me and his plaints to his daughter were of no avail.

Finding opposition useless, he tried to induce his prospective son-in-law at least to stay in Boston.

"I don't want to stay in a city," declared Mac, "where, for all its delightfulness, I have the example of poor neglected Virgin before me, and where your best group thinks it a favor to have 'treated Sophia well,' as Endicott says they have."

Knowing his irritable genius, I pardoned him, for my part. He went off with his bride to Cincinnati, and now he writes me that he makes a very good income.

I think Morne would like to follow too, but

he can't leave his business nor his place on the edge of society. Miss Yarrow and Jim Torringford, who had at several different times deigned to recognize Sophia, can not now endure even the mention of her name; and as for Mrs. Winterrowd, she reproaches me for ever having introduced Mac, who, she intimates, was almost an untutored savage.

Miss Stanlow and I still continue to look forward to dancing the Diagonal; but the satisfaction I take in that is divided with the pleasure I have in my pink rosebud.

One question still proves extremely puzzling to me: if I really loved Miss Morne, why did I abstain from testing my chances? But here the habit of a lifetime baffles me: I have been repressing my emotions so long, that I positively can't tell what particular one I repressed on that occasion.

"UNFINISHED."

I.

WHAT most attracted the notice of Jervis Faulder on going into the gallery of Childs & Purvis, the picture dealers, was a canvas presenting the full-length figure of a tallish, spirited young lady in a black dress, with some kind of timid, coy, dark bonnet on her head. Not a downright, conclusive bonnet, but one which seemed to have set out with a foolish plan of covering up those beautiful twists of pale chestnut hair, and then impulsively to have given up the idea. It was incomplete; and so was the painting. The young lady in black started out from the vague fumid tints of the background with wonderful vigor, smiling as if with the surprise of her own sweet advent. But the dress in portions was only scumbled on with great haste, and behold, one of her dainty hands was alto-

gether missing. Jervis knew it must have been dainty by reference to the other, which was seen holding a wrinkled glove. Below, on the frame, hung a card, bearing the word "Unfinished."

But the picture was evidently a portrait, and it was the work of a distinguished Boston artist, whom, in order to give him a classical air, we will call Venator. Faulder found the mystery of the subject and the incompleteness tantalizing, yet engaging.

"Have you seen that unfinished girl of Venator's?" he asked, when he called soon after on his friend Mrs. Crayshaw, of Brookline, an illustrious member of the social oligarchy.

Mrs. Crayshaw based her interest in portraits largely on the standing of their owners. "Do you mean the picture," she inquired in return, "or the lady herself?"

"The lady, by all means," said Faulder, promptly. "Do you know her?"

"That I can't tell until I have seen the painting. Of course, being by Venator, it's quite possible—ah, quite likely—that I do know her; that is, it must be very good."

(She referred really to the social status of the canvas.)

"You really ought to see it," Faulder urged. "There's time now, if you drive into town. We shall have the mellow afternoon light, and—" He paused, embarrassed, as if he had nearly betrayed some interest deeper than that of the idle connoisseur.

"I'll order the horses at once, and we'll go together," said his friend.

But when they reached the gallery and Faulder indicated the picture by a flash of the eyes, Mrs. Crayshaw stood instantly still, with a shock. A faint blush stole over her cool, handsome face, as though she felt herself unwillingly involved in a social impropriety. "That?" (in subdued remonstrance)—"why, that's only Miss Hetwood. Miss—what's that odd name?—oh, Candace; yes, Candace Hetwood."

"It's a charming name, at any rate," said Faulder. "Why do you say 'only'? Don't you like her?"

"Neither like nor dislike," Mrs. Crayshaw answered. "Her family were very obscure. I

just happen to know her name because she's a member of our congregation at St. Stephen's."

"Merely an impecunious fellow-worshiper, eh?"

"Weak sarcasm," Mrs. Crayshaw remarked, with playfully critical demeanor, "is a sign of immaturity. But, I forgive youth—most delightful of faults! The portrait is certainly a good one. But the original could hardly interest you: she's one of those girls who never get beyond a certain stage—require a second baking."

"Human ceramics," muttered Faulder. "She hasn't the true Elder-Brewster-teapot mark, I suppose. But Venator doesn't seem to mind. Is there any room left at St. Stephen's, Mrs. Crayshaw?"

"Our pew is always at your service," smiled that accomplished matron, looking straight through his well-cut waistcoat, and observing the condition of his heart.

It was but a Sunday or two afterward that Faulder repaired to the little Episcopal church where Mrs. Crayshaw worshiped (and allowed less fortunate beings to adore her). But he

did not claim admission to her pew. In the darkness of the church he could not at first discover the face he was looking for. But when the people rose—rustling like an extensive bed of artificial flowers—to recite the psalms of the day, a sudden ray from the outer sunlight fell into the transept. Then Faulder saw, bathed in the sunbeam, those fair cheeks and brown eyes and the pale chestnut hair which he already knew so well without having beheld them. Truth compels the statement that at this point he neglected his religious duty, and the service dwindled to a bewildering monotone in his ears. But the assembly soon sat down again, and Miss Hetwood once more disappeared in the barren stretch of artificial flowers. Inconsistent though it seems, the young man was surprised to find how closely she resembled her own portrait. He had expected to see her more prim and conventional, with less artistic fire in her features, less effect of a rapid sketch, and more of an air of having been worked out in all details. But he now perceived how exactly the painter's mode of treatment was in keeping with the original.

They had got as far as the Litany, when a stir in one of the aisles caused him to lift his bowed head, and this time he saw Miss Hetwood moving from her pew; an old gentleman, apparently her father, leaning heavily on her shoulder. Two gentlemen came to their assistance, and Faulder also left his place to follow, all moving out at the side door just as the pastor and his flock were uttering the petition, "—and from sudden death, *Good Lord, deliver us.*"

"Can I assist you?" the young man asked, as Mr. Hetwood was seated by the others on the stone step outside. "I am a physician."

Candace received his offer with a glance of swift gratitude; but though Faulder would have liked nothing better than to go on gazing into her frank brown eyes, he lost no time in producing his pocket case and giving a restorative to the pallid old gentleman, now quite unconscious.

"Oh, do tell me, is it anything dangerous?" Candace asked.

" I hardly think so," said Faulder, striving to maintain a calm professional manner, for

this unexpected contact somehow agitated him more than he could have believed. "It's only a fainting fit. See, he is opening his eyes again. Your father, I presume, Miss Hetwood?"

"Dear papa," cried she, bending over him, "are you all right again?" Mr. Hetwood nodded a feeble encouragement. Then she turned to Faulder. "I see you knew our name," she observed.

"Y—yes; so I did. I forgot that."

"Forgot what?" Candace looked surprised.

"I beg your pardon," said he, stumblingly. "Not your name, but that you didn't know it—I mean, know that I knew—" And here Faulder stopped, feeling that he was making an idiotic exhibition of himself.

"At any rate, we are greatly indebted to you," she said sweetly, ignoring his confusion.

"May I ask who this is?" said Mr. Hetwood, looking up.

"I will give you a card. I trust you feel quite well now?" Yet even while addressing him, Faulder could not keep his eyes from Candace.

At that instant a carriage, for which one of the other gentleman had gone, rolled up. Mr. Hetwood was helped in; he and his daughter bowed to Faulder; and the interview, which had barely begun, broke off abruptly. This was provoking enough. The problem that now presented itself was how to continue the acquaintance. Being wealthy, our young physician had not yet taken the trouble to burden himself with a practice, and so he found time during the next few days to think a good deal about Candace. He had not made up his mind what to do, however, when chance again favored him. Turning the corner of Winter Street suddenly one afternoon, into Tremont, he came upon the young lady herself, darkly dressed, but bright and rosy in the frost-keen air. If you have seen a Margoten rose or a La France on the bush, when a breeze gently ruffles the close-gathered petals, and if you have noticed that there is a change of crimsons in the folds of the flower, which makes it flush and whiten at the same time, you will know how Candace looked just then.

Faulder lifted his hat. "Pardon me for

stopping you," he said, "but I want to ask after your father."

"Oh, he seems as well as ever," she answered; "and I think he wants to see you. Can't you call some evening?"

"I should be delighted."

Before he could collect himself enough to ask their address, she had bowed and gone on. He turned to speak to her again, but she had disappeared among the crowd, and he gave it up.

"Is it always to be like this?" he wondered; "always something fragmentary and incomplete in our meetings?" But he bethought him of the sexton at St. Stephen's, and having learned the address, he made his call the next evening.

Both father and daughter were at home.

"I am glad to see you, doctor," said the old gentleman. "We hurried off so the other day, you must have thought us rude."

"Oh, not at all. As a stranger I had no claim upon you."

"The name of Faulder, sir," returned Mr. Hetwood, not in the best taste, "is too well

known in Boston for you to be a stranger. Your family—"

"I have myself heard a good deal about," said Jervis, smiling. "It's an old subject, Mr. Hetwood."

"But I'm curious," said the old gentleman, "to learn how you came to hear of our name." Jervis explained. But the mention of the portrait seemed to make Mr. Hetwood uneasy.

"How do you like being exhibited?" Faulder asked, turning to Candace.

"I don't like it a bit," she declared, informally.

"Shall you withdraw the picture then?"

Miss Hetwood flushed. "I can't," she said. "It's not mine. It belongs to Venator."

He saw that he had forced a disagreeable admission. "I don't understand his insisting on anything that is disagreeable to you," he observed. "And yet I ought to be grateful to him for it, for without the picture I shouldn't have made your acquaintance."

But Candace would not spare herself. "You see," she continued, glancing around the room, "we are poor, and can not afford such a painting as that."

"It ought to be yours, though," Faulder asserted, a plan suddenly taking shape in his mind.

He did not stay long; and on his going, they asked him to come again. "I shall be happy to have my sister call on you," he said to Candace, "if you will permit her."

"But I'm not in society," she protested.

"All the more reason why you should begin."

She hesitated, and then began a timid, "Well, if you think—"

"I do," said Faulder. "So we will call it settled."

It was not settled at once, however, for Miss Henrietta Faulder strongly objected when her brother proposed it to her. Leaving this difficulty to arrange itself through the play of natural curiosity which he knew how to excite, Jervis went off to see Venator.

II.

This painter, thriving on the patronage of a rich and cultivated class that adored him, was in a position to rail at their affectations or ego-

tism with impunity. Meanwhile he lived in a Bohemian way, occupying a bleak, lonely studio at the top of a huge commercial building, and squeezing a comfortable income out of his little color tubes. He was a man of more than middle age, with deep-set eyes and a long, careless, gray mustache. He received the young physician with a bitter, piercing glance that had no welcome in it, so that Jervis hastened to introduce himself and his errand.

" I want to buy your portrait of Miss Hetwood," he stated, briefly.

"It isn't for sale," replied Venator, with a kind of hiss from under his mustache. Then striding across the bare floor, he disappeared behind a canvas, which he stroked heavily with his brush, as if it were some kind of watch-dog that he was restraining for a moment.

" I thought possibly you would say so. But I have become singularly interested in Miss Hetwood, and besides—"

"Ha! you know her, then," the artist exclaimed, rather melodramatically, emerging from his concealment.

"A little. How came it that you had the

luck to find her, and she the good fortune to be painted by you?"

Venator had once more disappeared behind his easel. "That's right," he remarked, sententiously; "whittle your compliments fine at both ends." He then appeared to forget that any one was present, and worked at his picture in silence. All at once he resumed, casually: "One of the boys that study with me was acquainted with her. We went out to see her one day, and I could not sleep till I began the portrait."

A spasm of alarm attacked Faulder. "Who was the 'boy' you refer to?" he inquired.

"His name is Swinton."

Faulder knew that Swinton was a clever young artist, who handled trees in a familiar manner, and was pressing the cow into service as a sort of pictorial and female Pegasus. But Swinton's talent was greater than his personal attractions, so that he gave no cause for jealousy—supposing that Faulder cared to be jealous. After an awkward pause he said: "I don't wonder at your enthusiasm, but you must let me pay my tribute to the

genius with which you have represented her. This isn't a whittled compliment. It's a blunt one."

The painter looked around the edge of the canvas, suspecting a new light on his visitor. This time his eyes betrayed good-fellowship. "But it wasn't so much Miss Hetwood I was enthusiastic about," he affirmed; "it was the painting of her."

"Is she only good as a portrait, then?" Faulder queried.

"That depends on how you look at her," said Venator. "As a woman there's more nature than art in her, I should say. But that's an advantage. If I were in love with her, for example—" He appeared not to think the sentence worth finishing.

Faulder was annoyed. "It's hardly necessary to discuss her in that way, I suppose," said he. "Let us go back to business. It strikes me that it would be fitting for Miss Hetwood to own the picture herself. Will you allow me to buy it on condition of presenting it to her?"

Venator ceased working, but still remained

out of view, except for his legs, which were visible below the shelf on which his picture rested. The legs looked meditative. At length he said, abruptly, "You're interfering."

Faulder blushed in astonishment, at this indignity. "We'll agree that I am," he nevertheless answered. "Will you consider my proposal?"

The artist got up and stalked about nervously. "Tell me first what your interest in all this is."

"I might—if I could," returned the other. "I'm not sure what it is yet."

"Well, then, I'll answer your proposition with another: I'll keep the picture, and let you take the young lady."

"I decline to pursue this strain, sir," retorted Faulder. " I respect Miss Hetwood too much to assume that she can be made over to anybody by a word."

"You're a good deal impressed by her, I can see," said the painter, with exasperating satisfaction. "I'm serious, though, in saying that I'll stand out of the way."

"Oh, I didn't know you were *in* the way."

Venator came closer, with a passionate look in his eyes. "I was infatuated with her," he declared, vehemently. "But what's the use? It's not for me. I am too old; I'm miserable. Besides—"

"Well?"

"There's something about her—I don't know what—that always makes me uneasy. That's the reason I couldn't finish my picture. But it would be like losing a piece of my heart to let that picture go, now."

"You decline my plan, then?"

"Absolutely."

Faulder contemplated the barren floor for a while. Slowly he brought himself to put his next question. "Suppose a peculiar case," he began. "If relations were to change, if—well, to put it plainly, if Miss Hetwood should consent to marry me, would you give up the portrait?"

"You!" exclaimed the artist—"*you* marry her? You're incapable of it."

"Incapable!" echoed the young man, perfectly dazed. "What right have you to—what reason is there for your opinion?"

"Do you want it in all its nakedness?" demanded his sardonic *vis-à-vis*. "Well, then, you strike me as too finical, too much devoted to appearances, and too full of a certain kind of Bostonism, to let yourself be carried that far. Miss Hetwood will never accommodate herself to your notions, and you never can adapt yourself to her." He closed with a somewhat fierce stare, which Faulder met by a short laugh.

"There's only one thing more I wish to say," remarked the latter, dryly. "Since you're so confident of my incapacity, you can hardly refuse the request I've just made."

Venator winced. He saw that he was cornered. "Oh yes," he said, affecting carelessness; "of course, if she marries you, I'll let you have it."

"Very well, I sha'n't forget," said Faulder. "Good-morning."

It was with some bewilderment that, as he made his way out, he recognized how he had committed himself to the attitude of a suitor. Certainly he had not defined his own mood before he entered the studio; but it was rather a

relief to him that he had been surprised into doing so.

Several calls at the little house in Brookline, however, failed to produce any material change in the situation, except that he came to know Candace better. She attempted to play on the piano for him one evening, and plunged characteristically into a Schubert impromptu. It went off brilliantly at first, but before she could get through, Candace stumbled wofully, and at last left the piano stool in a fit of impatience, while there remained many bars to play. "I can't do it," she declared—"I can't possibly."

Faulder was amused, and tried to make her conclude, but she was not to be induced. Another time she was at work on some embroidery when he came; but on his next appearance he found that she had abandoned it in the midst, and had begun a small water-color painting of some flowers. This in its turn was never finished.

"Why don't you carry something through?" he inquired, disposed to take her to task.

"It's not in me," was her answer. "I never could do anything thoroughly to the end. Up

to a certain point I can do very well, but if I were to go on, I should spoil my beginning. So what's the use of my trying to be complete?"

To Faulder this was a new idea. For all that, he thought he would try to "form" her mind somewhat; so he investigated her reading. Finding it fragmentary and sensational, he advised some volumes of Motley, and insisted that she should read them to the very last page as a discipline, which she promised to attempt. He waited a few days, and when he went again, Candace hailed him with important news.

"I've had a visit from your sister to-day," said she.

"Ah?" Faulder lifted his light eyebrows. "How did you like her?"

"What a strange question! I couldn't help liking her a *little*, you know, when she was so kind as to come and see me."

He smiled at her undiplomatic honesty. "And what did she talk about?"

"Oh, everything: music—she asked me if I'd heard the new prima donna Tricoti; and science—Darwin on earth-worms; and society

—made me feel how few people I knew. Oh, Mr. Faulder" (she never would call him "Doctor") "I see plainer than ever that I'm a nobody." The poor girl seemed to be on the point of breaking down in tearful catastrophe, at the recollection of a doubtless trying interview.

"But you mustn't mind my sister," said he. "She's only a nobody too, mounted on stilts."

At this Candace burst into a cordial laugh. "I forgot: there's something still more important," she resumed. "Mrs. Crayshaw has invited me to her next kettledrum."

As Faulder had privately asked Mrs. Crayshaw to do this, he was not much astonished.

"Shall you go?" he asked; and Candace appearing undecided, he offered to escort her, with his sister.

"Oh, it isn't that, so much," she explained; "but I'm afraid to go. I don't know anybody, and I don't know anything."

He prevailed upon her to consent, however. "And how comes on the Motley?" was his next question.

"I shall never accomplish it," she answered,

desperately. "I've stuck in the first volume."

The young man had an inspiration. "Let me read it aloud to you," he proposed. "*Then* you'll get through."

Candace was delighted; and they began. But before they had concluded a single chapter, Mr. Hetwood came in; and that stopped the reading.

Candace went to the kettledrum—not in silk, but in a dress of white nuns' veiling (for it was almost springtime). Scarcely any one knew who she was, yet she drew decided notice, and Mrs. Crayshaw in a burst of generosity even declared that she was more beautiful than her portrait. Still, Candace was not at ease: she felt alone, and out of her element, and was full of the petty awkwardnesses of inexperience. Over and over she caught herself in some careless, half-slangy phrase, or in saying something too direct and earnest, which gave offense. And worst of all, she feared that Faulder noticed her short-comings and was displeased. She perceived that it was a mistake attempting to move among these

people. Impulsively, without even saying good-afternoon to any one, she departed. When Faulder, who had left her in the middle of a conversation, came back to continue it, he could not find her. He was vexed; and to increase his irritation he overheard his sister and Mrs. Crayshaw discussing Miss Hetwood in the most patronizing fashion.

"I can not understand," Henrietta said to him afterward, "how you can maintain your interest in this Miss Hetwood. She is not one of our world at all, and never can be."

"Perhaps the decision of that question won't be left to you," retorted her brother, with Orphic darkness.

It was on the next day that he once more presented himself before Candace.

"Don't say kettledrum to *me!*" she exclaimed.

"Why not?"

"Oh, I've done with that sort of thing. I'd rather live in a garret full of pictures, like Venator, than in society."

Faulder began to wonder if she had all along cherished a secret attachment to the grim old

artist. She seemed to be slipping out of his grasp. "There may be another alternative than the garret," he suggested.

"What one?" asked Candace, with indifference. "By the way, you haven't seen my new accomplishment. I'm making macramé lace."

"Ah, that will be very pretty! I'm thinking of getting up a class for our Motley and some other books; and, while I read, you can make lace."

He watched her a moment or two, as she showed him the process. Suddenly she dropped her work, saying:

" I can't do that knot. Do you see how?"

"I have some knack at tying," he answered. Then they began to discuss different knots, and he explained them to her. "I've helped you with these," he said at length, in a timid tone. "There is another, more important than all, that you might help *me* with."

She looked puzzled at first; but he soon made his meaning clear, as much by his general behavior, and the way he looked into her eyes, as by words. Impulsively he took one of her hands, and though she did not resist, he

as quickly released it. "No, not that one," he exclaimed. "The other—the unpainted one."

Half inclined to sob, Candace burst unexpectedly into laughter. "What in the world!—the unpainted one?"

"I mean," he stammered, "the one that wasn't in the picture. I want it now for my own."

Venator kept his promise. As Faulder's wife, Candace was a social success; and it was remarkable how Mrs. Crayshaw, Henrietta, and the rest now discovered that what they had before considered a want of "finish" was really charming originality and refreshing naïveté. Venator not only made a wedding present of the portrait, but also offered to complete it.

"Not for the world," responded Faulder.

And so the picture remains, as Candace declares, a symbol of their love, which is always to be "unfinished."

MARCH AND APRIL.

I.

CURIOUSLY enough, April was born in September. Old Major Maynadier (he ought to have been named Grenadier), at present retired on half pay, had married his wife in an April, and was not ashamed to say that that month was, of all the twelve, the dearest to him in its associations. Therefore, with military precision, he resolved that his first child should receive in baptism the name given to the fourth division of the calendar. It was exceedingly lucky that the first child proved to be a girl; because, if it had been a boy, the Major's idea of discipline would not have permitted any infraction of the order which he had issued, and the boy would have had to carry through life the title which the Major had fixed upon.

By an odd conjunction, Mr. Lowe, his next neighbor on the banks of the Hudson (near Yonkers), who was an intimate friend of the Major's, had a boy, born a year before, whom he had christened March, in compliment to an aristocratic relative.

The Lowes and the Maynadiers saw a great deal of each other; the members of the two households going to and fro across the stretch of lawn and fields and the quiet turnpike that separated them, with as little ceremony as if they all lived on one estate and belonged to a single family. They never took the trouble to balance the account of visits exchanged, but gave and received hospitalities with that freedom which attaches to the gifts we most value and are unwilling to mark with a price. The quiet turnpike just mentioned was no obstacle to this pleasant intercourse, though it divided the Major's farm from Mr. Lowe's country seat. But it was so very quiet that the town decided to make a new road, which would be more traveled, and abandon this one. The new road was made; the old one fell into disuse; but from the day that this happened, the

boundary—no longer a boundary—so easily crossed before, became the subject of dispute between the two families, and separated them as it never could have done while it remained a highway.

The question was, to whom did the road belong now that it was given up by the public? According to law, of course, it reverted to the original owner of the land, or his successor; but the date of its construction was so far back, in Revolutionary times, that it proved hard to ascertain positively who the original owner had been. A diligent searching of titles ensued, with much thumbing of dusty tomes at the Registry of Deeds, and collecting of collateral evidence. But some of the old landmarks by which the boundaries of the properties had been described were missing now, and the whole matter was involved in just enough uncertainty to make each claimant perfectly sure that he was in the right. When things had reached this pass, Mr. Lowe came over to call on the Major, one day, and met that officer on the path to the front door.

"I had just started to go and see you," said

Major Maynadier, politely, but without extending his hand or smiling.

"That's singular," said Lowe. "On the same errand, I wonder?"

"I don't know," was the answer. "I was going to speak about the—ah—the old road."

"So was I!" rejoined Lowe, in a hearty tone, as if it were the most delightful of topics.

He was a broad-chested, vigorous man, whose cheeks glowed like rosy embers from among the mingled black and ashen hues of his beard; while the beard, long and copious, had a manner of growing that made it look as if it were blown backward by a strong wind, against which he was determined to prevail.

The Major, on the contrary, was rather thin; his face was cleared of all hairy *impedimenta* except a small, severe mustache. But he was as firm and upright as a palisade. Although he might not be at his best in an attack, it was evident that on the defensive he would hold out forever. "Very well," he remarked, becoming more conciliatory than at first, "since we have the same object in view—"

"Let us hope that the same views will be an object to us," Lowe threw in, playfully.

"Suppose we step into the house," the Major continued, feeling that the jest was ill-timed, "and talk it over."

They betook themselves to the "office," which in spite of its rigorous name,was a pleasant room, furnished with books and having windows that overlooked the Hudson. April was there—a bright-haired girl of eight years—nestled in one of the window-seats, reading a book.

"We shall have to disturb you, pet," said her father. "Mr. Lowe and I are going to talk business."

The child rose; a charming little thing she was; but the corners of her mouth showed her disappointment.

"What! no kiss for your old uncle?" cried Lowe, catching her on her way to the door. "What are you reading, dear—poetry? Why, you don't need any poetry—at your age."

"But I like it," said April.

"So do I," he rashly asserted. "At least, I like you: and that will do just as well, won't it?"

So the small face was lost for a moment in

the cloud of Lowe's beard; and when the cloud was withdrawn little April danced away to the door, smiling.

Maynadier somehow felt that his friend was taking advantage of him by this proceeding. And yet, wasn't it perfectly natural and customary? He sighed, without knowing it.

"Here is the map," he announced, sitting down at the table. "I have looked up the whole thing, and put signs here to show the old landmarks. As a matter of fact, a careful measurement has convinced me not only that the road belongs to my farm, but that my rights extend a little into your present inclosures. There was a mistake made in running fences, long ago."

"Oh, come, Maynadier! isn't that a little steep? Excuse me," Lowe added; "I mustn't get ruffled. My desire is to consult amicably. You may have made a mistake yourself, you know. But, even admitting that you haven't, you surely remember that when you bought this estate I released a small claim which I had on the Butternut field. I wanted you for a neighbor, and preferred to be courteous."

"Certainly, Lowe, I remember. I was

about to say that, in consideration of that, I give up my claim to the strip of land I'm speaking of. So we start square as to the road."

"But the road," said the other, leaning forward with his blowy beard against his chest, and looking resolute, "the road is as much mine as yours. According to my view of it the old line ran somewhat crooked, but, virtually, it gave the major part to me."

Maynadier regarded him with a grim smile.

"The Major part," he said, "is exactly mine."

Lowe laughed, but uneasily.

"I wasn't punning," he said; "I didn't mean that."

"But I did," said Maynardier doggedly.

"Well," resumed his neighbor, "let's see how you make it out. What's this?" He put his finger on the map. "The old 'tree scarred by lightning,' mentioned in the ancient deeds? You know there is no trace of it left. How can you locate it?"

The Major became reticent.

"I've got evidence enough," he declared.

"All right," said Lowe. "Suppose, now, I were to show you a weak spot in your defenses. You know the hollow by your gate?"

"Yes, yes. What about it?" Maynadier inquired eagerly.

"Well, sir," Lowe replied, "I can prove that my line should extend from the granite bowlder one furlong and two chains to that very spot; thence westerly—"

"How can you?" demanded the Major.

"That's my affair," his friend answered, leaning back with an obvious inclination to chuckle.

The Major sprang up, impatient. "Good heavens!" he cried, sorrowfully. "Have we gone so far that one old friend is concealing information from the other, as if we were in court?"

"Not one old friend," Lowe pointed out, "but two. We're both in the same box, Maynadier."

"Lord, yes! the witness box, I should think," groaned the Major.

"It is absurd," Lowe confessed, somewhat touched. "Let us see. We have both got along hitherto without owning the road. What do you say to dropping the question, and leaving the whole confounded lane as it is?"

"Impossible," was the reply. "If it's common property some one will invade it. Besides, though we agreed, our children might not."

"Ah, yes! the children," Lowe repeated, thinking of his sturdy boy March, whose ruddy cheeks and tawny hair, he had often thought, would make a fine accompaniment to April's more delicate beauty, if the two should conclude to be husband and wife by and by. "Oh, well," he went on, growling a prelude to concession, "it isn't worth while quarreling. Don't let's be a pair of fools, old man!" He didn't consider that he himself could be a fool under any circumstances; so it was rather generous to assume that he might possibly be.

"I admit that it's foolish in one sense," said the Major, with pained dignity. "The land is not much account, anyway."

"True," said Lowe, going to the fire and warming his back, as if to thaw himself into magnanimity. "Hang it! I'd almost as lief let you have it all."

"Why, Lowe," exclaimed the other, "that's more like your old self!"

" I say *almost* as lief," his friend proceeded. "But that would hardly be fair. So I think we'd better divide evenly."

Maynadier's face contracted with the invol-

untary surmise that his neighbor was taking an easy way out of a weak position. He turned and gazed stonily through the window, his eyes resting on the silent river, which seemed to emblemize the stream of misunderstanding that was slowly widening between his neighbor and himself.

"I can't do it!" he exclaimed, at length. "We should never be quite satisfied, either of us. And then—it wouldn't be right, you know. I hate to have any difficulty with you, Lowe, and would make a sacrifice to avoid it if I could. But this is an affair of rights. One of us ought to have the whole or nothing. Which of us is it to be?"

"By George! It isn't going to be the one that's not entitled to it," Lowe declared, setting his teeth. He walked the length of the room and back—always with that appearance of contending against an obstinate breeze. "I've done all *I* could; and I'm bitterly disappointed in you. Why, you won't yield an inch! You're about as pliable as a jack-knife—only one hinge in you, and when that moves you cut whatever you come down upon. You

want to cut it square off. That's what you're going to do to our friendship."

The Major repressed his wrath, but it came out plainly in his words: "Mr. Lowe, violence isn't going to help us. If you want to dispute my title, do so in the proper place and according to the proper forms. The business-like way is the legal way."

"Oh, yes!" retorted Lowe, "I know that. You shall have plenty of 'the legal way' before we get through. But the responsibility is not mine—only the land is," he flung back, after gaining the threshold.

The door closed quietly behind the tumult in which he rushed off.

He did not enter the house again for twelve years.

The first phase of the combat, after this interview, was that the Major continued to use the old road as a means of communication with the new turnpike, though Lowe had, on his part, laid out a new driveway for his own house. Accordingly, before long, Lowe resorted to the courts, and obtained a temporary injunction forbidding the Major to use

the road; so that Maynadier had to open a new approach to his farm. Then Lowe put up signs at the two points where the old route passed his territory, warning trespassers. His antagonist immediately erected rival sign-boards. Next, the Major executed a strategical movement. He pulled down his fence—which was a cheap post and rail construction, quite old and out of repair—along the whole border on that side, so as to include the disputed ground with his own.

Now, Lowe was in much better circumstances than his neighbor, and had an excellent fence of iron to mark his side of the way: consequently he was much averse to imitating the enemy's tactics when destruction was resorted to. But his case against Maynadier had, meanwhile, come to trial, and was proceeding very slowly. He lost patience; could not endure the quiet exultation with which the defendant was seen, nearly every day, pacing about and contemplating the little breadth of dirt which he had added to his fields; and the upshot was that the iron fence had to come down, though each separate stake in it inflicted a wound

upon the owner's mind. The limits of the rival domains were now traced only by a few stone sockets on Lowe's side, and by a row of old tent-pegs on the Major's. But the plaintiff at least gained the satisfaction of seeing that the defendant no longer prowled along the roadway with an air of proprietorship.

Such folly may seem incredible; but a real estate quarrel—especially when the subject is of petty dimensions—must always be classed among the acutest cases of disagreement. The dumb earth, under such circumstances, has a way of reasserting a primeval power over the human clay that goes around asserting lordship of the soil from which it was molded.

The Lowes, when speaking to acquaintances, derisively alluded to the deserted highway as "the Major part." And the Maynadiers, with equal sarcasm, called it the "Lowe-lands —very low indeed."

"It is amazing," said Mrs. Maynadier to her husband, "that a man who seems so much a gentleman as Mr. Lowe, and is so earnest a Churchman, should have been so aggressive."

"Yes, it is," the Major assented. "After all,

I shouldn't have pressed the matter very far if he had simply allowed me to use the place as a private drive."

"And then too," his wife rejoined, "he is rich, and we are comparatively poor. He doesn't really need the land."

"No," said the Major; "but what can you expect? Those wealthy people are very apt to be like that."

On the other hand, Mrs. Lowe said to Mr. Lowe: "It's always so, John. If you interfere with another man so far as to help him, he's sure to be ungrateful. The great mistake was, your doing Major Maynadier that favor about the Butternut field."

"I suppose it was," sighed Lowe. "I'm sure this is a very small matter we're fighting about; but there's a principle involved. He wouldn't meet me half-way." Here Mr. Lowe grasped more firmly the newspaper he had been reading, and rustled it in a fashion suggestive of an aroused moral sense. "I assure you, my dear, I don't feel any bitterness. But I'm going to beat him, if it takes five years!"

Thus the two families continued, in the

midst of strife, to be very forgiving—toward themselves.

They worshiped in the same church; went to see the same people; attended the same parties, very often; but all direct intercourse was broken off between them, and they ceased to recognize each other. Maynadier, as well as Lowe, had entertained a dream—the future union of his daughter and young March Lowe; but such a scheme as that was now out of the question, and he shivered as he thought of the mistake he might have made in encouraging it. The children, of course, were instructed in the mysteries of the dissension, so far as they could understand them; and the struggle of the two houses, with its blighting effect on their own former friendship, overshadowed everything else in its malign importance. It took its place in their minds among the great controversies of the world which they were then studying—the rivalry of Cæsar with Pompey, and the like; for children regard these troubles more seriously and with more suffering than we commonly remember that they do.

Mr. Lowe won his case; but it was carried higher on exceptions, and ultimately was started on its slow way to the Court of Appeals. Then, too, the Major found an excuse for bringing a suit as plaintiff against Lowe; the proceedings were postponed; endless delays occurred; not only five years passed, but ten; and still the two men were locked in their wrestlers' embrace, until it seemed that they were likely to become petrified in that attitude.

Meanwhile the disused road underwent changes, and became a narrow belt of shaggy growth between the two properties. Nature had taken a hint, and, despite the leveling of artificial barriers, had reared a makeshift barrier on her own account. The obsolete ruts were completely matted in grass and wild flowers. Then shrubs sprang up; a haphazard plantation of small trees was created. The green-brier tangled its thorny vine and glossy leaves over the larger growth; sharp-savored barberries flourished by the stone remnants of Lowe's fence; and, being little molested there, birds made their nests among the thickets.

Finally, the wonted trail of human travel was transformed into a winding tract of bloom and branch, full of song and perfume, but rarely invaded by the foot of man or woman.

By the time the frontier war had gone on for nearly twelve years, it became so monotonous that the two belligerents grew languid in its prosecution, and treated it as a wearisome matter of course. But while the old folks stood comparatively still, March and April had been rapidly advancing to the dangerous period when courtships may be expected; and their parents showed a great anxiety to keep them out of each other's sight. March was sent to St. Paul's School, in New Hampshire; and when he came home for the long holidays, either the Maynadiers rented their place and went away, or else it happened with suspicious regularity that April had to make visits at a distance. At last March went to Harvard and April was established at Vassar. Naturally, she was a little the more rapid in developing, and they both graduated at about the same time; but they had so seldom been in the same place together, for several

years past, that it would not have been astonishing if they had not known each other on meeting. And it was nearly as difficult for them to meet as it would be for the prophetic male and female figures of the old-fashioned barometer, one of whom is always shut up when the other is out.

The young man was decidedly handsome; a large, athletic fellow, with strong, frank features, of whom his mother sometimes complained that he was vehement to roughness. At other times, however, he could be as gentle as any one might wish. He liked to wear a velvet coat and stalk around at his ease; and although he had tried the severest measures for taming his leonine hair, even to cropping it, he had given up the struggle and now allowed it to tumble over his ears and forehead as it would, in a way appropriate to his impetuous character. It was said that he was rather wild at college; rumors whereof coming to the knowledge of the Major, that officer remarked to his second-in-command: "We see now, my dear, how fortunate it is that all possibility of a match with Prillie was shut off long ago.

Really, this quarrel may have been a good providence."

"Yes," said Mrs. Maynadier, accepting the opinion as it were on the point of her crochet needle, and working it firmly into the texture of an afghan she was making. "Oh, if it *had* happened the other way!"

But in another respect the providence was not so favorable. For the Major's litigation had been a serious expense to him; he could not afford the depletion: his house and farm had both been running down, growing more and more shabby.

The two young people had their own opinions of the complication. April, at the age of ten, used to wish she were a boy so that she could fight and thrash their neighbor's son; she considered him, next to his father, the most detestable person on earth. At present, having had a liberal education, she exonerated him entirely. March also, who had once been consumed with rage and bitterness against the Maynadiers, came back from college with a nobly impartial mind, and was disposed to smile indulgently upon the foolishness of his

parents and their enemies. At the same time both were anxious not to be disloyal to their respective elders; and so they had to keep these opinions to themselves.

That summer, when they had both just graduated, the estrangement between them was supposed to be so completely established that precautions were relaxed. Lowe said to his wife: " I'll be hanged if I'll live any longer under this terrorism. March won't see anything of the girl any way, and if he does, there's no danger now. He must pass the summer here." The Major arrived at a corresponding decision. "I can't find a tenant for the place this year," he said: "and, besides, why should we always be running away or sending Prillie away? It amounts simply to being tyrannized over by this man Lowe. I won't submit to it! If he doesn't want to keep his young cub here, I'll let him settle that for himself."

Consequently, April stayed too; and the two old gentlemen rejoiced in the idea that they were offering a mutual defiance.

II.

March strolled down to the remoter end of the old lane one afternoon, carrying his gun with the purpose of firing at a mark. Looking for some suitable target, he came suddenly upon the Major's forgotten trespass-signboard. It was battered and defaced, and brought back a boyish memory to him. "Funny thing!" he said aloud; "I had almost forgotten the time when I came down here and threw rocks at that board. Gosh! how I hated it then! Well, there's the M for Maynadier left yet: that'll do first-rate for a mark, if I can only get a clear range." His father's opposition sign stood not far from the other, intact, but he was averse to attacking that; so, after selecting his position, he opened upon the M with his breech-loader, and demolished it in a few shots. After this, the amusement palled upon him. He laid his gun aside, sat upon a bank of sward, and began to meditate. He could not help thinking that he had done an absurd thing, in blazing away at the old sign-

board, which he really had no right to maltreat. True, the whole situation between his father and the Major was absurd; but ought he to allow himself to share in it? He wondered what April was like; it was a long time now since he had even caught a passing glimpse of her.

Suddenly there was a rustling in the bushes not far away, which caused him to spring up; and the next moment he beheld a young woman's figure emerging from behind a leafy covert, to pass across the space that intervened before another thicket, on the way toward the Major's house. A shape so lithe and graceful that, clad as it was in a close dress of evanescent green, it made him fancy for an instant that the visible spirit of Springtime stood before him, waywardly returning out of season! March had been so noiseless, even in rising to his feet, that the girl was within arm's length before she saw him. With a quick turn of her head she started, then stood still, trembling inwardly as if in unison with the black-birch sapling beside her, which still quivered from the touch she had given it in passing.

March bowed, holding his little round cap in his hand. "Miss Maynadier?" he said, with a questioning inflection, though he was in no manner of doubt. "I hope I didn't startle you?"

With the faintest ripple of disdain on her lips, April answered, "Oh, not—not at all;" her involuntary double negative giving truthfulness to the statement.

"I meant," said he, embarrassed for his own part, "by my shooting. Did you hear the gun?"

"Yes; but I wasn't frightened; I was some distance away then. I—I didn't know it was you."

"Then you *would* have been frightened," he queried, attempting to smile, "if you had known who it was?"

"That doesn't follow," she returned, distantly. She gathered her dress in one hand, to go.

"I thought no one ever came through here," he said. "Otherwise I wouldn't have done such a thing as to shoot."

"I seldom come," April informed him,

coldly. "It only happened that I had been down the road to see a poor woman; and I thought I was perfectly safe in walking on my father's land."

A shadow seemed to cross the young man's face, thrown from a threatening cloud; but he mustered resolution and dispelled it. "Don't let us discuss the question of ownership," said he. "Why should we keep that up?"

His expression was so candid and friendly, she feared lest he should offer to shake hands across the old roadway, and she answered in haste: "It is very unfortunate that we have met here, Mr. Lowe."

"The misfortune," he replied, "is that we should meet so like strangers. But you may be sure of one thing, Miss Maynadier: there is no danger of my shooting anywhere in this neighborhood again. Wherever you choose to walk—no matter who owns the land—I shall consider the place sacred."

It sounded fearfully bold; he had not foreseen at all that he was about to speak so strongly; but he was always going head over heels, and, besides, the magic of April's pres-

ence somehow charmed the words from him before he was aware. April herself was thrilled by them; but she said only, "You seem to forget that we *are* strangers. We really have no right to be talking here. I am going."

Her voice was low and fluttering, like the notes of a bird in the surprise and distress of actual capture.

"Wait one moment," he pressed her. "Did you notice the mark I had been firing at?"

"No—oh, yes; that was it—the old sign. I saw it was freshly splintered. It's a shame to destroy poor papa's property; for you must admit that *that* belongs to him." And pretty April flushed with an indignation which she would have been glad to relieve by sobs.

"I do admit it," said March, with a contrition that made him handsomer than ever; "and I'm sorry I did it. Please believe me, it was purely thoughtless."

"Thank you," said April sweetly, brightening again at once. "Another time you'd better fire at *your* father's sign." Instantly afterward, to his astonishment, she fled at a run-

ning pace and was out of sight, before he could decide from the sound with which she ended whether she was laughing or crying.

The interview had been so unexpected and brief that he could have doubted her being there at all. Was it really April whose voice he had heard, or only the summer breeze murmuring over the verdant maize, patting the little faces of the upturned leaves till they smiled and shook in the sunlight? The sun shone so brightly on the moving twigs and branches among which she had stood, that he was dazzled, and felt as if he had been conversing with an illusion.

But there was no illusion about the hapless target. A great row ensued when the Major discovered what had been done to it. His lawyer immediately wrote to Lowe's lawyer demanding reparation, and Lowe's lawyer wrote back a refusal; and there was every prospect of a new minor suit for trespass and damages. March promptly concluded that April had told her father of their meeting and his confession; but it cut him to the heart to think so. Evidently the encounter was not to

her a treasured, secret episode, as it was to him. But why should she have been so mean as to "tell on" him? That had not been her custom when she was a little girl. He stormed and complained about it to himself in strict retirement, but presently reflected: "Oh, well, we're not children now, and people change so as they grow up. She's a woman, too. Women don't understand honor in our sense." In the end he took a daring resolve.

The Major, the next day, ran against a torpedo in the shape of an innocent visiting-card bearing the words "March Lowe." After the first shock he inspected the seemingly explosive card more closely, and began to think he had mistaken its nature: it was probably a flag of truce, bringing notice of surrender. "Show the gentleman in," said he to the alarmed servant.

March came in, quiet as a lamb. He had brushed his belligerent hair into peaceful order, and was dressed with punctilious perfection. He came to offer an apology for his assault upon the non-combatant signboard, and to say that he, not his father, was the

offender; it was his own affair, and he begged to put up a new board at his own expense. The Major was amazed, flustered, pleased, and yet fearful that he might compromise himself by accepting the offer.

"It shows an admirable disposition in you, my boy—pardon me—Mr. March!" he said, at last. "But—er—I think such a step will embarrass your relations—ah—at home."

"Never mind that, sir. I take the responsibility, and I must insist on replacing this property."

Finally the warrior agreed to the proposal.

"There is one thing more I wish to say, sir," March continued. "You were informed of the damage I did, but you do not seem to know that I at once expressed my regret."

"To whom, then?"

"To your daughter, of course."

The Major stared aghast.

"Yes," said March; "when she told you of the offense, she ought to have told you of the apology, too."

"My daughter, sir? She never told me at all. It was one of my men found it out. But

I should be glad to learn how you came to speak to my daughter."

March saw, too late, the terrible mistake he had made.

He stammered, and tried to avoid explanation; but the Major insisted. March's temper rose; his hair also got out of order: he made a defiant confession, and stood glaring at the man who, it was now clear, could never be his father-in-law.

"I see through your maneuver now!" cried the old soldier, with a sardonic sniff, indicating that he smelled gunpowder and liked it. "Ingratiating yourself with me, eh?—clandestine meetings with my daughter—take me in front and flank at same time, eh? Well, sir, it stops here. I refuse your overtures. I'll have nothing to do with property restored at your expense, young man. If it's restored at all, your father's got to do it; and, what's more, I shall write to him to keep his son off hereafter."

"As if I were a dog, sir?" shouted the young fellow, in a towering passion. "By thunder, if you were not so old— But I'll just tell you,

no one can whistle me on or off, and I forbid you to speak to me in that style."

"Forbid as much as you please," the Major hurled back, scornfully. "It's cheap, for I don't propose to speak to you at all."

"Nor I to you, sir!

And March went out like a lion, and drove down the Major's avenue roaring. But he hit upon an ingenious method of consoling himself. He repaired to the place where the signs were, in the dead of night; pulled up both his father's and Maynadier's; carried them painfully to the Hudson; and dropped them into its tide. No one could discover who had done the deed; and March was so loud in his denunciations of the Major, that Lowe even forgave him his disloyal advances to the enemy.

These events made poor April quite unhappy. "But there's one thing gained," she said to herself. "March will never think of going near the old road now, because he won't want to meet me; so I can walk there as much as I please."

With a wisdom matched only by hers, March also divined that, in view of the renewed

hostilities, April would carefully avoid the debatable ground, where there would be peril of encountering him. He therefore took to strolling through it, disconsolately, at frequent intervals.

And they met, but were not frightened. They met again and again, and talked, and came to an excellent understanding. The wild barrier sheltered them against observation from either side, but it could not prevent a catbird from watching them sharply while they strolled along arm in arm; and how that catbird exerted himself to warble for them his choicest variety of mocking songs! There was one kind of music he could not imitate, however—that was the sweet, trustful murmur of April's voice as she exchanged confidences with March. On other days, when they could get away long enough without attracting notice, they would repair to a particularly secluded spot, where March read aloud to her, chiefly poetry, for which April, as he discovered, had a great fondness. At this time their special enthusiasm was for Philip Tyrwhitt, a young New York poet, who had just "come

out"; "a rosebud poet," March called him. They pored over his volume with the greatest delight, for its pages were suffused with the matin glow of their own love, until he became for them an inspired guide, a mythical divinity, whom they imagined as living with ideal grandeur in some higher atmosphere. The bare truth is that, just then, Tyrwhitt—having with difficulty secured a brief vacation from the hot city—was staying at a small seaside boarding-house where he paid five dollars a week. But the lovers decided to write to him separately, in care of his publishers, and tell him what pleasure he had given them. Tyrwhitt received the letters with joy; they did not come together; but he observed the peculiar names, and, taking it for granted that, being so unusual, they were assumed ones, he did not answer the notes, but laid them away among the few paper treasures that were the only reward his book brought him.

Happy as they were, though, the young pair suffered from not being able to see one another as often as they wished, from the great caution they had to observe. "There's

only one way for it," March declared, tempestuously; "we shall have to get married, and let the old folks make the best of it afterward."

April was terrified at the thought; the flush of hope in her cheeks faded away to a windflower white, and she shook as though she felt the chill of a wintry air. But this phenomenon was only a natural incident of the transition from a frost-bound state of things.

Every time they met, March urged the idea with vehemence, and April resisted it. They came nearly to the point of quarrel. "You are so masterful," said she. "You insist so. You don't seem to see what a terribly serious thing it would be for me, how much more it involves for me than for you. It's like tyranny on your part." And he replied, "But, April, you are so changeable! One time you tell me that everything depends on me, and that you never can be happy until we have escaped from all this mist of uncertainty; and then, when it comes to the point, you veer around and refuse to escape." So they went on fretting together, until it seemed as though they were going to supply a sequel to the disagreement

of the elders. But then there came a Sunday when they were in church. The two families had pews in close neighborhood, both being too proud to exchange them for others at a greater distance; and when the prayer went up that all who were present should be delivered from "envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness," it found an echo in the two young hearts that repeated it almost as if it had been uttered then for the first time. As they filed out of the church, March and April managed to exchange a glance of mutual trust and forgiveness.

In a week or two a grand party was given at the Lowes', to which everybody was invited except the Maynadiers. March danced and talked furiously, but was gloomy and abstracted nevertheless; and all the young ladies who were there went away with the conviction that he had been spoiled at college. The Maynadiers, not to be outdone, summoned local society to a ball in their run-down old mansion a fortnight later, which, of course, the Lowes were not asked to attend. But after everybody else in the Lowe villa had gone to

bed, a stalwart young man, wrapped in a voluminous light cloak and finished off with a slouch hat, strode forth and descended to the old road, where, lying among the bushes, he watched the lights and listened to the music of the revelry in the Major's house, till the last lamp-gleam in a certain window was extinguished. And April, sitting by that window listened to the mournful chirring of the insects in the grass and trees, which at this hour sounded so melancholy and purposeless. The insects supply a mournful refrain to the joyous chant of summer, by way of contrast and compensation. "But they are monotonous," thought April. "They have only a single idea —to stick to their one little querulous note. Ah, why should we human beings, who know so much better, go on doing the same thing?"

For all this, she could not be persuaded to take the step which, in her lover's opinion, would settle everything. The whole summer passed, and nothing decisive was done. When winter came, March was regularly installed in his father's office in New York; but as soon as April was sent down to the city to spend the

season with some kind friends who were ambitious to introduce her into society, he discovered that it was impossible to attend to business properly and go up to Yonkers every night. So he took a lodging in town. April's chaperon was so vigilant that, although the young people several times found themselves in the same room, at various entertainments, they never could get a word apart. For March to call was out of the question, and it was just as impossible to communicate by letter. Altogether—or perhaps I should say, all alone—March grew exasperated under these trials of his patience. Yet a trial still more severe was in store for him. The matron in whose charge April was placed bore sealed orders from the Major, who could not afford to come to town with his wife; and those orders permitted a moderate discretion. In pursuance thereof she gave encouragement to an attractive young gentleman by the name of Swan, who manifested a great interest in Miss Maynadier. Do not suppose that I am going to rehearse the old tale of the hated rival whose heels loaded with gold turn the scale. Swan was not as

well off as March Lowe, but he was comfortably provided for; he was also good, honest, and agreeable—a most dangerous combination. And the Major and Mrs. Major were quite agreed that it would be well to solve the problem of April's future by letting her nestle under Swan's wing. Naturally, March got wind of what was going on; he heard of Swan's public attentions and incessant visits; and the stir that they aroused in him all but carried him off his feet. "What a frightful winter this is!" people said, complaining of the weather. It was indeed very cold; and if you had heard all of March's tempestuous ejaculations, which he hurled at the four corners of his room, you would have said that the ominous rumblings and whistlings around the chimney and the windows of the dwelling where April abode were simply the outcries of his discontent.

Hurrying across Fifth Avenue, one afternoon, he met her coming up the fashionable thoroughfare. It was one of those mild, yielding days that show a willingness to glide over the verge into spring-time. April came toward him in a suit of gray, with edgings of soft, whitish fur

around her throat and wrists, like the last lingering drifts of snow. He took his place by her side and walked on with her.

"Oh, you ought not to do this!" said she. "We must never be seen together!"

No doubt it was an anachronism, a very uncalendrical thing, for March and April to appear in company; but March persisted in keeping step with her until he had made a sharp and clear declaration that, come what might, he was resolved not to be thwarted by Swan, and that he should go to visit her in the matron's den if she did not immediately consent to elope with him. "Well, you know I can't possibly run away with you," said April plaintively; "so you will have to come and see me there. But I—I will write you when."

In due time he received her note of warning and heeded it, seeking her door on an evening when artless indisposition kept her at home alone. This time March entered gruff and threatening, like a lion again. He was fully charged with freezing jealousy. "This man Swan!" he exclaimed. "I want to have it explained! If things go on as they are now,

I shall believe—no matter what you say—that you're going to marry him."

But April was so unexpectedly sweet and mild that he could not resist her blandishments. His tawny mane was alarmingly ruffled, but involuntarily he began to smooth it down with his hand. April looked pale, but she hesitated no longer. She promised to give up bridesmaids and the reception and all the rest, and marry him where and how he pleased. "It's a pity," said he, "that that poet of ours, Tyrwhitt, isn't a minister; for, if he were, he would arrange to marry us, I'm sure, in the thickets of the old roadway. There would be something appropriate in that, wouldn't there, April?"

The light rested deliciously on the pale-gold hair above April's eyes as she looked up to answer him. "How lovely that would be!" she cried. But then in a breath's space she moved her head; the light was lost, and she moaned: "It can't be so, and we can not even stand up before the world and say that we are one."

"Oh, well," March rejoined frigidly, and his

voice was like an icicle dropped upon a flaming columbine—"if that's the way you feel, perhaps we might as well give up everything."

"No, no," cried April, in a shower of tears, "I can not give you up!" And so she fell upon his shoulder.

When he left the house March was as gentle as a lamb. Meanwhile Tyrwhitt, the poet, of whom they had thought for an instant, was on his way home to his lodgings, in worn-out clothes, wondering how he was to live during the next month.

It would be useless to detail the commotion caused by the elopement. When the news reached Mr. Lowe, that supposititious breeze against which he had so long been striving stopped instantly, and, figuratively speaking, he fell prone forward, and became quiescent. On the other hand, Major Maynadier, who had faithfully stood bolt upright, toppled over and fell backward. Such was the effect of a single gust of impulse on the part of March.

The feud of the two families came to an end. The Major and his friend discontinued

their pending suits; a grand reconciliation party was held; and the unkempt growth which had severed the adjoining estates was cut down to a genteel hedge, completely obliterating the whilom source of strife. Shortly after the wedding celebration there appeared in a magazine some verses by Philip Tyrwhitt, entitled

MARCH AND APRIL.

March and April, hand in hand,
Wandered through the dreamy land;
March with wild and careless bluster,
Like a warrior going to muster;
April laughing, light and bland,
Holding flower-buds all a-cluster.

But, before the sun had set,
April's eyes with tears were wet;
Ceased her rosy lips their smiling.
March, though eager in beguiling
All her fanciful regret,
Won her with his tender wiling.

Then together, hand in hand,
Glad again they roamed the land.
All the land was now awaking;
Birds sang loudly, buds were breaking;
"*This*," said March, "was what I planned
For our bridal merry-making!"

Most of the critics paid no attention to

these modest stanzas; but those who deigned to comment on them in the daily papers observed that it was simply absurd to conceive of two spring months making their appearance together.

"Do you think it absurd?" March asked his wife, referring to one of these sagacious notices.

"Just look me in the eyes and ask me that again!" April answered. "But how do you suppose Tyrwhitt knew?"

How indeed? He certainly never had met either the bride or bridegroom, and knew nothing of their history. Perhaps the names signed to their tributary letters haunted him, and prompted his invention. No one ever fathomed the secret; probably Tyrwhitt himself could not have explained how he came to write those verses. Of one thing I am sure; and this is, that we have here an accredited instance of a poet's fantasy being carped at by the critics but fully confirmed by the reality.

"RAISING CAIN."

IT was probably a great surprise to Johnny Oxhead to find himself born. At all events, he continued to wear throughout life an astonished and rather dazed expression, as if he had never quite managed to make out why he was in the world.

He was the son of humble parents, and had good reason himself to be still humbler than they; for he did not even know who his parents were. They doubtless had some clew to their own identity, but he had none. When he appeared in the world, they disappeared—at least, so far as their relation to him was concerned.

Like Moses, he was found among the bulrushes—not of the Nile, but of the Hackensack in New Jersey—where he had been left with every prospect of closing a brief existence as obscurely as he had begun it. There was

no convenient Pharaoh's daughter at hand to rescue him; but he was picked up by Oxhead, a poor fellow, half fisherman and half day laborer, who happened to pass that way in his boat. He had more children of his own than he knew what to do with; but, probably for that very reason, took pity on the foundling, carried him home, provided him with a name, and gave him a start in life. Johnny stayed with him until he was six years old. Then—inheriting a tendency to disappear, as his parents had done—he decamped to Jersey City, where he entered upon a variegated and uncertain street-boy career.

From bootblacking he rose to selling newspapers, and by some mysterious process absorbed from them a slight knowledge of print. His favorite reading was the head-lines; these were the easiest to grapple with. Being a newsboy, he thought it a misfortune to have papers in his hands long enough to peruse the contents carefully; but he felt a keen professional joy in all accounts of violent crimes and deadly disaster, and sometimes, when business was over, paused to spell them out and ponder

them. "Fearful Loss of Life!" or "Horrible Murder!"—these were the phrases in which he most delighted, for they generally had the effect of increasing his limited income.

By degrees he became a sort of specialist in this department. The most interesting thing in the world, to him, was the variety of ways in which human beings could be suddenly and unpleasantly sent out of it; and he had not the slightest doubt that this was the chief topic in other people's minds. Seeing the prominence given to these matters in the journals, he naturally concluded that the proper study of mankind was violent death.

Emigrating from Jersey to New York by means of a free passage on a ferryboat, he became a sort of authority among the small patrons of the Newsboys' Home, on poisoning, stabbing, highway robbery, railroad accidents, mysterious murders and lynching.

"What are lynching, anyway?" a little fellow with pale and wizened cheeks and a meditative turn of mind once asked him, at an evening session of the boys with whom he consorted. "Why do they call it that?—somethin' like

pinching, aint it?—pinching the life out of a feller?"

"No," said Johnny, with disdain. He had thought over the point a good deal, and had imagined an origin of the term, which he now firmly believed to be a fact. "You see," he went on, "there was a man onst who did a mean thing—somethin' goldarned mean—I forget what 'twas. But some other fellers got after him for it. And he useter go round in a cart what had a tailboard to it. Yer see? Well, they got after him. They found out he done it, and they caught him while he was drivin' the cart; and one feller he just took the linchpin out of the tailboard and drove it into that man's head and killed him. That's how they come to call it linching!"

The meditative boy's face became, if possible, more wizened than before, with the intensity of fascinated horror caused by this explanation. One or two listeners made skeptical remarks, but they were promptly outvoted by the others, because Johnny Oxhead was an authority.

Nevertheless Johnny's life was a dreary

and forlorn one. He was half-starved, and his attempt to sustain nervous energy by subsisting partly on cigar stumps and half-burned cigarettes picked up on the streets did not materially improve his health. To add to his misery he found that, in spite of his wretched diet, he was getting bigger every year; and when he arrived at sixteen he had outgrown his usefulness as a newsboy. The smaller boys, who were continually coming from somewhere or nowhere, and crowding into the business, turned against him, and insisted on his getting out of the way. At first, relying on his superior size, he scorned and defied their opposition. But he had no allies. All the other big boys were branching into other lines of work; and the small ones, humming around him like a swarm of gnats, finally drove him from the field.

He was reduced to taking occasional jobs as a hooter, to carry "extras" through the city at unwonted hours, shouting out: "Oh, the extra! Read the extra!" He was always accompanied by another hooter, of about his own size and age; but while Oxhead yelled out the

words in a hoarse, agitated tone, his companion, at the other side of the street, repeated them in a higher key, so as to produce an artistic contrast. Oxhead's partner in the team was Josh Ingalls, and they often achieved great results as they went around the streets making night hideous together. But the occupation was too uncertain, and Oxhead, finding the world against him, and this kind of life unprofitable, drifted to the docks, and became a longshoreman.

For several years he went on gaining a livelihood in this employment. He worked fearfully hard, lodged wretchedly, had little to eat, and was without home or friends. At times he would be unable for weeks together to get work; and then he drifted along the docks or through the streets leading to them, as a beggar or tramp, with no place in which to lay his head, and existing only by charity. Some nights he slept in a corner on the wharves; on other nights in cellar-ways or at the station houses. When business revived again, he resumed the old round of toil, getting kicks and cuffs, a good many hard words and very

small pay, for he was not a particularly valuable hand. It is not to be wondered at that the problem of life puzzled and troubled him, or that his constitutional look of dull surprise became more fixed than ever.

At last, in a dim way, a little ray of brightness pierced the fog of misery in which he existed. Several times in his work around the steamers and canal-boats, he had seen and talked with Ellen Skeeney, the daughter of a captain of a coal-barge. Ellen was not a beauty, but she was a tall, shapely girl, with a rather pleasant face, and seemed to take a fancy to him. Oxhead, on his part, fell in love with her; at least, so far as he could tell—for all his ideas were vague and hazy—he was in love with her. He did not see her often, because she lived with her family on the barge, and was off on the river most of the time. But he began a sort of courtship, although his social position was considered much inferior to hers; and, apart from the girl's liking for him, he had not much chance of success, unless old Skeeney should secure him a place in the barge business where he could work regularly.

At this juncture Josh Ingalls, his old partner in "extra" hooting, reappeared. Oxhead had not seen Josh for several years. They met accidentally, and Josh, being very hard up, asked for a little money. Oxhead happened to have some, and loaned him a liberal sum—an entire dollar. In a few days he found that Josh, too, had begun to engage himself for jobs about the wharves and ships. Very soon they became rivals in this line. Josh was smarter, stronger, steadier than Oxhead, and frequently displaced him. Moreover he came to know Ellen Skeeney, and showed a tendency to supplant Oxhead in her affections.

Worse still, he postponed payment of the dollar loan so long that Oxhead began to grow desperate about it. His mind frequently reverted to its old lore concerning the destruction of human beings, and he considered whether, if Josh still refused to return the dollar and Ellen's heart, it would not be well to settle the account by taking Josh's heart's blood as payment. This mode of settling the debt struck him as being quite satisfactory.

Toward dusk, one day, he was passing from

one wharf to another along the heavy string-piece at the inner end of the Cunard dock. He had just heard from Ellen herself that she had accepted an offer of marriage from Josh Ingalls; and as he roved along from dock to dock, with no idea as to where he was going, his thoughts were divided between a desire to throw himself into the river and a fierce longing to take bloody revenge upon Josh, if he could find him. There was a high pile of lumber heaped on the quay, leaving but a narrow passage between it and the sheer edge of the dock. He chose to take the narrow passage, where he would for a moment be screened from all observation. But just as he passed behind the piled lumber he saw a figure sitting under its shadow in the dusk, the figure of a man, busily examining something that he held in his hands.

It was Josh Ingalls, and he was engaged in counting over a small bunch of soiled bank-notes. He did not observe the approach of his rival.

Like a flash, Oxhead darted upon him, caught him by the throat, and wrenched away

the slender roll of bills. Ingalls grappled with him, and they struggled furiously on the narrow space between the pile of lumber and the edge of the stringpiece which overhung the water. At first, so Oxhead afterward said, he meant no more than to seize the money, take his dollar, and keep the rest long enough to embarrass Ingalls in his engagement to Ellen. This seemed to him a mild and justifiable revenge. But when their hand-to-hand struggle began, it became a question which should throw the other into the river. Oxhead was much the more powerful of the two. They were entirely concealed from scrutiny by the heap of lumber on one side, and in two other directions by the blank walls of the huge sheds on the wharves inclosing the dock.

The fight was short—Oxhead threw Ingalls; knelt upon him; held him firmly by the throat with one hand, and then, mad with rage, drew a knife which he wore inside his belt, gave his helpless enemy two or three savage stabs, and then threw him heavily over into the water, and listened to the dull, plunging sound and momentary splash with which the body sank.

Oxhead was a murderer! He realized the fact fully, on the instant. But, instead of remorse, a wild exultation swept through his heart. For the first time in his life, it seemed to him, he breathed and expanded as a full-grown man. All the obscure sufferings of his aimless and wretched career were made up for by this one moment of triumph. Besides, he was safe! No one could have seen him doing the deed. The only other presence there besides himself and the corpse now floating in the tide, was that of a big Cunard steamer, the prow of which loomed up in a black and ugly way through the gathering darkness. There was a dim lamp burning above the deck, near the bow, and the hawse-hole for the anchor chain, close to the cutwater, seemed to stare from the black hulk like a monstrous eye. But, luckily, the eye had no power of sight. Nevertheless, Oxhead shuddered as he noticed the resemblance. He began to feel restless, and hurried from the spot.

He went forth with the brand of Cain on his brow; but no one looking at him would have suspected that it was there. He wore simply

the old look of dense perplexity which had always clouded his face. * * * There were no blood-stains on his clothes.

He stuffed the paper money into his pocket before he emerged from behind the lumber. His sense of elation began to return presently. He strolled about from one to another of the longshoremen's convivial resorts, produced his money with freedom, treated, drank, and was as gay as he knew how to be. But before he crept away to his squalid lodging he went back once more to West Street, opposite the dock, and, slouching along on the side furthest from the river, watched to see if there were any stir going on that might indicate the finding of the body. Everything was quiet. He went to bed.

The next morning the papers had accounts of "Foul Play" and a "Horrible Murder." Oxhead, starting out early to get his cup of coffee and plate of buckwheat cakes, heard a small ragged boy calling out the words close by, and at once shrank back into the hall of his dingy lodging. But, a little later, he ventured forth again. What need had he to fear anything?

He did not even trouble himself to look at a paper, until two or three hours afterward. Then, slowly reading the report, he was startled to find that a sailor on the Cunarder had seen the fight and the killing, and had given a description of his appearance by which he might possibly be traced. But he did not attempt flight. He believed that he had had ample cause for murdering Ingalls. He knew the penalties of killing, but he knew also that murderers are often acquitted. In any case, he had done one of the deeds in which, he felt sure, the world takes the most interest, and he was not inclined to run away and lose all the credit of his work. That evening, after toiling along shore all day, he was arrested and locked up in the Tombs.

Oxhead was now only 21. The reporters brought into play various devices of rhetoric—pathos, horror, indignant virtue—to emphasize his adolescent depravity. The case attracted a great deal of notice. "Yes, I done it, and I had a right to," Oxhead declared with sullen bluntness; and, instead of setting people against him, this assertion appeared to win

sympathy. The story of his luckless love affair came out. Many women called at the prison to see him. Nearly every day he received flowers from feminine sympathizers.

One morning the grated door of his cell was opened, and a benign-looking maiden lady of middle age and of high social position came in, sat down, talked gently with him, and proceeded to read aloud to him for an hour from an instructive book, very little of which he understood. But he appreciated her effort. He had killed a man, and knew that he was worthy of all the attention that the public had to bestow upon him; and he saw that this sweet elderly maiden comprehended that fact. So he forgave her for the dullness of the book.

A little fund was raised by his admirers, to employ a good lawyer, and he was greatly pleased by the serious, confidential interviews which this gentleman held with him. He astonished the lawyer on one occasion, though, by saying to him in a burst of enthusiasm: "I'm only a poor, uneddicated feller. But, I tell you what, I never did expect to be a great public character as I am now. This is the best part of my life!"

And, as he looked at things, this was true. When his plea of justifiable homicide had failed and he had been condemned to be hanged, his lot became still more favored. He was treated with tender and even pathetic consideration. More flowers came. "What a pity they can't keep fresh for my coffin," sighed Oxhead, gazing at them; and he exacted a promise from the sheriff that he would have a special little bunch of flowers provided as an adornment for his "casket." The benign maiden lady of high social position came and read to him again, nearly every day, and a spiritual adviser also visited him and began a forcing process to develop his soul and save it, by a sort of hot-house process, before it should be too late.

In short, Oxhead had never until this period known what it was to have rest and leisure and enjoyment. He read with laborious attention all that was said about him in the papers, and looked back with pride at the ascent he had made from his own former humble place as a newsboy. There was only one drawback upon his comfort and gratification: that was, the request of the clergyman and the benign maiden

lady that he should acknowledge his act in killing Ingalls to have been wrong, and repent of it. But as the day of execution drew near he saw that it would make things more peaceful and add greatly to his personal comfort if he consented to gratify them; and accordingly he did so. Then there was a petition to the Governor for his pardon, which Oxhead generously and impartially encouraged. Even Ellen Skeeney, with copious tears and a strong sense of her own nobleness in doing so, signed the petition. But it was of no avail.

When the day of execution arrived Oxhead ate a "hearty breakfast," according to the orthodox practice of all redeemed murderers, although he was a little disappointed at the small space allowed him in the morning papers. He knew that some of them would give a column or more to the description of his last moments the next day, when he would no longer be in a position to read the news. But he ascended the gallows cheerfully. From that height he was able to view at a glance the wonderful progress he had made from ob-

scurity to his present proud eminence. A prayer was made; the drop was sprung; and Oxhead shot up still higher.

The process of "raising Cain" had been completed.

IN A MARKET WAGON.

IT was in a spirit of wayward adventure that I set out, one evening in early autumn, to walk from F—— to the little town of L——. The night was gusty and overcast, and before I had gone more than two miles, a chill and noiseless rain began to fall through the lugubrious darkness. I increased my pace to a run, as the road descended into the wooded hollow that lay before me, and pressed forward at a jog-trot through the moist lowland, under the overhanging masses of huge maples and chestnuts, and between solemn lines of silent pines. I think I might go through many regions, walk many nights, without encountering any scene or situation that should give a sense of solitude more complete and melancholy than that which here came over me. I was wet to the skin, but glowing from my long run, before

I came upon the first house that had lain in my path for a mile: it broke in some measure the spell of solitude in which I had for a space been enveloped. After that, I encountered dwellings pretty frequently, and even passed through two villages (of which I did not know the names, for it was my first experience of the route, and I had not even consulted a map) but the air of weird remoteness still clung around me.

Much that I saw in passing has now escaped me; but, as I recall the road, under that dim illumination of the fleeting, watery sky, I see before me at one point a sudden bend, with white railings on either side, at the elbow; and hear again the hoarse rush of a falling stream. A house stood on the left; the stream, as I found on drawing nearer, made its fall on the right, and then shot beneath the road, where the white railings were. A slender current had been diverted into a high trough beyond the little bridge. I stopped there, and, hollowing my hand, dipped up a shallow draught from where the water trickled out of the duct into the trough. It was sweet, but at

the same time warm and oppressive;—like the night, for it had now ceased raining. Indeed, I was in a mood to believe that it bore some deep affinity with the peculiar mood of the atmosphere, the curious circumstance of my adventurous presence in this spot, and the uncertainty as to whither I should extend my wandering, and how terminate it, before the sunrise of the following morning. I could have fancied it a stream not flowing from common springs, but a charmed distillation from some rock-hidden still, sent hither for my special need, to fortify me for adventures yet to come. It smacked of home-made mystery.

Next, after a long interval, there was an episode of pretty villas by the roadside, with gardens trim-kept, so far as they could be seen, and a late light in a library-window, one of the drawn-up curtains of which admitted the hurrying pedestrian to a transient glimpse of the interior. After that, houses began to appear in groups here and there; gradually the rumbling of a wagon made itself heard on a neighboring road which presently converged with the one I was on; and at last I entered

the town. It was silent, and hardly a light appeared in the whole place. Suddenly a light wagon, containing a merry party, clashed toward me from the darkness of a winding street; deposited one of its company at a house, the door of which was shut with a loud clap, as he entered; and then rolled away again. I looked up at the church-steeple, but could not distinguish the hour; and it was too dark to see my watch-face. Then I stretched myself on a bench in the little green triangle in front of the church, and considered with myself the strange possibility of passing the night there.

In a little while, however, I walked on faster, and came to a large inn, which was close-shut and darkened. At this moment, a small wagon, creaking in a slow, dry manner, came up behind me, and halted by the tall and powerful pump placed by the roadside, between the house and its open stable-yard. A pair of sleepy men with a lantern were pottering about, and, on the owner of the wagon asking them whether many wagons had already passed, became a little livelier; so that I put some ques-

tions. Finding there was but little chance of securing a resting-place here, I determined to follow out what had all along formed a possible extension of my plan.

"Can you take me to the city, if you're going that way?" I asked of the wagoner.

"Well, I don't know," he said, giving his trousers a slight, slow tap with his stubby and lashless whip. "I shan't get there till daybreak."

"Never mind," I said, "I'm in no hurry. And I would just as lief pay you what I should have given for a lodging here, if you'll take me."

The farmer went to his wagon, and worked at the seat he had arranged for himself.

"It don't make any odds to me," he said presently. "Though I don't go very fast, and I don't know whether you'll find anything very comfortable to sit on."

So it was arranged. I jumped up, and established myself on the hard board laid across at the front, bracing my back against a barrel of early apples, and resting my foot on the traces in front. The horse was soon rested and

refreshed, so far as the possibility lay open to him at all, and we started off, at a slow pace; the animal striking the broad, hard highway with heavy footfalls, and the wheels ever crackling wearily on their axles. For a time, our talk was dispersed and immaterial. But at last we drew up by a little tavern in which a hospitable light was glowing, and from which came strains of a desultory fiddle. Being by this time well chilled from the previous rain, and my inactive state during the drive thus far, I followed the wagoner's lead, through a dingy room in which some red-faced young men in black clothes were diverting themselves with a fiddle, and a double-shuffle executed by one more accomplished than the rest, into a smaller and brighter apartment beyond, where we were soon obsequiously attended, and served with warming liquor.

Here first I had an opportunity fully and distinctly to survey my companion. He was a short man, with a red face, a sort of blunted nose, and dusty, tired eyelids, and white hair—it was almost wholly white. When he mounted the wagon again, he was more disposed to conversation than before.

"Yes, it's hard," he said, quietly, in answer to an observation of mine; "it *is* a hard life. Three times a week, now, I get up at midnight, and come down to market. Well, I'm getting old. Used to do it every morning; but I'm too old, now, for that. Get up, Robin."

And he smote the horse with his ineffectual whip.

"Hard on the horse," pursued the wagoner, "working in the field,—I can't spare him,—and then goin' to market." He gave a low grunt of luxurious fatigue, as if to relieve the unspeaking horse; and presently whipped him again.

We went on talking of the vicissitudes in his trade.

"Well," said he, "I don't know but I shall have to hire a man, next year, if I can get the money together. It don't hardly pay, as it is. Just make the ends lap over, and no more. My son was with me one year, on the farm, and it was a great help. I've felt it more, since."

"And he's married, now, I suppose," said I.

"No," the farmer answered, in a dull tone, "he's dead."

I can not tell what passed immediately after that. It was no case for prompt response; and yet, I may have made one. The farmer had summed up, in his two syllables, the total result of life, so far as he was concerned in it. There was something in his whole tone which conveyed this; and his estimate of the calamity was beyond comment or correction, then. But some quality of the speechless night-hour helped us. The impulse of pity, and the suppressed yearning for fresh and ever-renewed sympathy, met, and in their meeting formed a bond between us for the time being, at least. The darkness shielded this broken and sorrow-smitten soul, still decently proud and shy in the showing of its grief: he sought relief in speaking to me And this was what I heard that night, moving slowly on the road, amid the petty clatter of our wagon, and interrupted from time to time by a flick of the whip, or an ejaculation to the horse.

"It was his twenty-first birthday. I don't know why it should have come just then; but it did. That was the way the Almighty had

fixed it, I suppose. And it was down at the pond near where you told me you live. There's where he was drowned.

"Well, sir, it seems strange, now, to look back on 'em all,—those twenty-one years! If you haven't any children, you can't tell what it is. But I say to you, sir, when the child has once come, you ain't the same man, any more; you're that child, then, as much as anything else. If he dies,—you don't exactly die, I know that; but it ain't much better. Well, I saw that boy growing up from the little bit of a thing he was at first, all the way till he was a man, piece by piece, changing from a boy into a young man, so that you couldn't tell hardly where one left off and the other joined on;—and then, all at once, he goes off, brave and happy as ever, and that's the end of it. Just a little pleasure party of three or four of his friends and himself going off to bathe; and he got drowned.

"I was twenty-one myself, when I got engaged to be married. Just his age! I wasn't married for several years after that, though. And then it was a good while before we had

the baby. Well, I suppose you may say all my life, until he was born, was a sort of leading up to that. And now it seems a good many years to have lived, before I had a son. I didn't use to think so. I don't think, any way, I ever thought of it at all, while he was alive. But things change; it seems, now, as if all those years had been wasted. Why, they only led up to his being born, and now he's dead!

"But it does me good, after all, to look back on my life, and see how I lived it up to then all for him, without hardly knowing it; and then, after he came, how I lived for him purposely, every day, and didn't often have my thoughts off him. We was pretty careful of him, always. We never had but him. He was a good boy, from the start,—only just wild enough to show he had a spirit. But we was all the tenderer with him. Folks say a child is too good to live, sometimes. I don't believe it. I don't see why he couldn't have lived, why he wouldn't have been living now, if he hadn't happened to have got drowned. You see, he did live twenty-one years. So that wasn't the reason. But, even if I wasn't par-

ticularly afraid of his dying, it was just the same as if I had been, as far as taking care of him goes. He was a good learner, and we sent him to school straight along; only I had to look out he didn't work over-hard. I don't know what he'd have been, if he'd lived. He was too full of real go, to keep on farmin'. He'd have done it, if I'd said so. But what I wanted was to make money enough to let him go his own way. Somehow, money seemed to come easier in those days, when we wanted it for his bringing-up; though, of course, we had bad years, too. But that was before the war.

"He went to the war, too. I don't suppose it was any harder for us than it was for lots of folks at the same time; but I tell you it was a terrible burden. There he was gone three full years, and only once he came back on a furlough; and all that time not a thing his mother could do for him, except knit stockings and hem shirts, and once or twice she managed to get a box of good things for him. Now when I think of it, there have been plenty of times that I didn't see him at all,—whole winters when he was off to school and academy, and I

never saw him; and then those three years at the war. Fully one-quarter of his life I didn't see him, counting in odd days, I guess. And I suppose I'd ought to have got used to it. But it ha'n't made any difference; I miss him just the same. I pretty near gave him up, that while he was at the war. And it does seem strange he shouldn't have got hurt, all the while. He was in a good many battles, too, and down in those places where they had the fever so bad; and yet he came home all right. Maybe that was what made it all the harder, when something did happen afterward.

"My wife, she says perhaps it was wrong to have been so rejoiced over his coming safe home; that we didn't think enough of what others had suffered that had lost their children in the war. Perhaps it was a judgment on us; I don't pretend to say it wa'n't. What I do know is, it was harder than ever to lose him, when we'd just got him back. Somehow it's strange he should have died just that way. It was a beautiful day; you wouldn't have expected anything so sad was going to happen. The grass so green, and sky shon' blue as ever

any other summer day; but he got his death of it, for all that. Sometimes I see it all before me just that way as if I had been there when it happened; though I've never been to the pond since. Don't think I ever shall go. But I see him a-goin' into the bright, calm water, tall and slim,—though he had a good broad chest and a stout back,—just as full of life and fun as he could be; and then I remember how he looked when they brought him home. Nobody could tell just how it happened. The boys was so frightened, they couldn't tell it straight. Well, I don't wonder. Who *could* tell how such a thing happened? It's no use; it wouldn't make it any better; he couldn't have come alive again.

"Yes, it was a great help, as I was saying, to have him on the farm that one year. He was a good hand. That's what I was thinking of, when I began talking to you about it. Most likely I shall have to get a hired man, next spring. I was thinking of having another horse; Robin's pretty stiff. I need a new one, pretty bad. But I guess I shall have to put the money into a hired hand. Go 'long, Robin; seems to me you're awful dull to-night."

Before the first morning twilight crept along the highway, I had left the farmer. Our roads diverged; I leaped down from my rough seat beside him; I have never seen him since. For a little while, I heard the wooden rattling of his modest cart, as he drove on toward the city by another way from that which I followed. Then the sound died away. But when the sunrise appeared, floating in over the sea and crowded city, I thought of him still. It was a dawn fairer, as it chanced, than many fair dawns I have known. The sky in the east was set thick with clear-cut clouds of fresh crimson, drifting in long lines with their points against the wind, and separated each from each by slender rifts of gray. As yet, only an occasional vehicle of clumsy sort clattered over the pavements; and in the intervals of quiet, a dim and multitudinous whisper seemed to pervade the air, as of the ocean softly breathing in a dream. The farmer was by this time breakfasting in a dingy refreshment-stand of low price, near the scene of his impending business. In an hour, market would begin.

THE END.

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